GRANDE FINALE
CAMPAIGN FOR WESTERN CAROLINA STRIKES THE PROPER CHORD WITH DONORS, STUDENTS AND FACULTY
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TICKET INFORMATION
calamantickets@wcu.edu
calamantickets.com
800.34.GOWCU

NICE SHOT
Student photographer Jarrett Frazier captured junior guard Mike Williams in early season action against Duquesne as Western Carolina hosted sub-regional rounds of the O’Reilly Auto Parts CBE Classic. Williams and the Catamounts are gearing up for the Southern Conference Tournament, set for March 4-8 in Charlotte.

ON THE COVER
Students such as Christina Banner (with Brandon Robinson ’05) are at the heart of the recently concluded Campaign for Western Carolina.

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Cindi Magill
Bob Buckner ’67, your Pride of the Mountains has just won the Sudler Trophy, the nation’s highest honor for collegiate marching bands. What are you going to do next?

“I’m going to Disneyland,” Buckner might reply, except for one fact. Buckner and the 350-plus members of the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band will be too busy getting ready for — and participating in — the 2011 Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year’s Day in Pasadena, Calif.

That doesn’t mean that fans of the matching musical unit often referred to as “the world’s largest funk rock band” can’t squeeze in a visit to the so-called “happiest place on earth.” The university is organizing alumni and booster packages so that family members and others can accompany the band on the trip, set for Dec. 29 through Jan. 2.

Although details were still being ironed out at press time, a variety of packages are in the works and are expected to include accommodations for up to five nights in a Los Angeles-area hotel, tickets to the band’s pre-parade performance at Bandfest, tickets to the 2011 Rose Parade, local transportation and evening special events.

The band is seeking sponsors to help defray the cost of the trip, estimated at between $1,600 and $1,700 per student. “It’s not going to be inexpensive to be able to accept this invitation, but it will certainly be worth it for the experience of a lifetime for our students and for the international exposure it will mean for Western Carolina University,” Buckner said.

Surprise announcement of the band’s invitation to take part in the Rose Parade came during a ceremony recognizing WCU as winner of the 2009 Sudler Trophy. Representatives of the John Philip Sousa Foundation officially presented the award — a prize that has been called the “Heisman Trophy” of the collegiate marching band world — at halftime of WCU’s home football game Oct. 24.

Band members were wearing yellow rose boutonnieres with purple ribbons on their uniforms for the Sudler presentation, thinking the adornments were representing the university’s colors, when they learned of the Rose Parade selection from the public address announcer.

“The Tournament of Roses has selected Western Carolina University to participate in ‘America’s New Year’s Celebration’ because of your band’s excellent musical talents, entertainment value, performance skills, and your outstanding directorship,” Stacy Houser, chair of the parade’s music selection committee, said in a letter to Buckner.

“The Pride of the Mountains is one of only 15 bands from around the world invited to participate in the Tournament of Roses Parade and the 29th annual affiliated event known as Bandfest, joining six annual invitees for a total of 21 bands taking part.

Called “the Super Bowl of marching bands,” the parade is held annually on New Year’s Day in conjunction with the Rose Bowl college football game, part of the Bowl Championship Series. “The parade will be watched by 1 million people live and an additional 1.5 billion around the world on television,” said Jim Hahn, the parade’s master of ceremonies and music adviser for the tournament.

GO WITH US!
The alumni band booster package trip includes:

- Five days/four nights at an Anaheim-area hotel
- Reserved parade seating
- Tickets to Dec. 30 Bandfest
- Parade float construction tour
- Hollywood/Los Angeles tour
- Airport transfers (if part of group flights)
- Local transportation to all package events
- Official Tournament of Roses program

THE FOLLOWING MEALS/RECEPTIONS:
- Welcome reception, Dec. 29
- Chancellor’s luncheon, at the University Club of Pasadena, Dec. 30
- New Year’s Eve party for band, alumni and friends
- Lunch during Hollywood/Los Angeles tour
- Breakfast, Jan. 1
- Post-parade lunch, Jan. 1

Cost per person — $999 (or less, depending on hotel choice). Airfare not included.

For more information about travel packages or sponsorship opportunities, call 828.227.3052 or visit the Web site roseparade.wcu.edu.
FORCE OF NATURE
For Genevieve Burda, commitment to WCU is part of a long, strong family tradition

By JILL INGRAM MA ’08

Education and the environment were more than abstract concepts to the late Genevieve Whitmire MAEd ’69 and E.J. Whitmire, and results of the family’s devotion abound at WCU. E.J. Whitmire contributed site preparation for the football stadium, which bears his name, and was instrumental in establishing natural resources as a course of study. University faculty and students in that department continue to monitor forested stands at the family’s 1,000-acre Cherokee County farm (the majority now in a conservation easement and owned and operated by son Steve Whitmire).

Over the years, three generations of the extended Whitmire family have established three endowed scholarship funds for students of education and contributed substantially toward the sciences through support of programs and a professorship. E.J. and his daughter, Genevieve Whitmire Burda, also demonstrated their commitment to the university through service on the board of trustees. Burda retired in 2009 after a decade, and according to Chancellor John W. Bardo, the university has “never had a better trustee.” Burda “was always there, was always prepared and could get people excited,” said Bardo in October, when he presented her with the university’s annual Distinguished Service Award. Burda’s brother Steve Whitmire said his sibling “usually can get what she wants with a little bit of charm and humor.”

As a trustee, Burda served on the board’s finance and audit committee (including four years as chair) “during a time when the committee had a lot of work to do,” said Chuck Wooten ’73, vice chancellor for administration and finance. That committee oversees architect selection for construction projects, and primary was the university’s $46 million, 160,000-square-foot health sciences building. Scheduled for completion in 2012, the building is the first facility to be constructed on approximately 350 acres the university purchased on the west side of N.C. 107 and is the cornerstone of a planned neighborhood focusing on retirement, aging and health.

From the beginning, Burda lobbied for an architectural firm with depth, but one with local ties that also was experienced in mountain construction. “My interest was definitely in having it fit with the lay of the land,” Burda said. Ultimately, the committee selected Pearce Brinkley Crace and Lee, an architectural firm with an office in Asheville.

The building will feature a number of sustainable elements, including a rooftop garden that cleans water runoff by filtering it through dirt and vegetation; passive solar heat; natural light; and rooftop solar collectors that will aid in heating water. The building will be WCU’s first with LEED certification from the U.S. Green Building Council, meaning it meets standards for environmentally sustainable construction. “I was just stunned when I saw the initial drawing,” Burda said. “It just fit into that mountainside so beautifully. It’s a signature building, and that’s what we hoped for.”

Burda and her husband, Larry, who are retired and live in Mars Hill, have three daughters, Kathleen Wirth ’97 MAEd ’01, Cindy Burda and Carey Burda ’08.

FAST TRACK
Students to design and build a race car to enter in automotive engineering competitions

By TERESE KILLIAN TATE

Ronald Bumgarner ’90 MS ’92 tinkered with a ’55 Willys Jeep when he was growing up. These days, it’s an ’04 Wrangler that Bumgarner, assistant professor of engineering and technology at Western Carolina University, modifies. One day he hopes to develop an electric commuting motorcycle and build an airplane — possibly an old Warbird replica.

Bumgarner has a love for projects fraught with engineering challenges, and that’s just one reason he’s excited to work with the WCU students gearing up to design and build a race car to enter in a national Formula One racing series automotive engineering competition in 2011. His other reasons are academic: The WCU student chapter of the Society of Automotive Engineers offers another fun, hands-on activity that would challenge students’ interest in engineering and allow them to use the tools and skills they are learning in their courses.

“We initially had intentions of building a rock crawler as our first automotive project, but students this year jumped all over the quarter-scale Formula One racing series associated with SAE International,” said Bumgarner. In the competition, originally called the “Mini Indy,” a fictional organization awards a prize for competing concepts to the late Genevieve Whitmire MAEd ’69 and E.J. Whitmire, and results of the family’s devotion abound at WCU. E.J. Whitmire contributed site preparation for the football stadium, which bears his name, and was instrumental in establishing natural resources as a course of study. University faculty and students in that department continue to monitor forested stands at the family’s 1,000-acre Cherokee County farm (the majority now in a conservation easement and owned and operated by son Steve Whitmire).

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Burda and her husband, Larry, who are retired and live in Mars Hill, have three daughters, Kathleen Wirth ’97 MAEd ’01, Cindy Burda and Carey Burda ’08.
Student William Ritter doesn’t mind making the cultural jump from portraying the “Fiddler on the Roof” in a university theatrical production to sawing away on his fiddle in WCU’s Mountain Heritage Center, if that means he can participate in his newfound passion of old-time string band music.

On any given Thursday during the fall and spring, about 5 p.m. or so, Ritter and other members of one of campus’s newest student organizations, the Porch Music Club, carry their stringed instruments into the museum’s lobby, exchange a few greetings, then sit down and start playing. There’s no Roberts Rules of Order here and no approval of the minutes from the last meeting. There is a good bit of string-tuning, followed by a suggestion of what song to play first (“‘Soldiers Joy’…? Okay.”) Then the action begins.

Suddenly, the lobby is filled with live music that seems to fit perfectly with the museum’s exhibits and artifacts. The combination of sounds coming from guitar, fiddle and banjo blend together to create something that sounds sort of like bluegrass, but not really. Imagine bluegrass played with more of a folkish, mountain-sounding rhythm. One big difference is that the banjo is played in the traditional “clawhammer style” rather than with the three-fingered roll that exemplifies bluegrass. Whatever it is, it works. Spectators soon have grins on their faces, and the mountain folks in the photographs on the wall would be clapping their hands in time, if they could.

The formation of the Porch Music Club was sort of a humorous accident. Ritter, a Bakersville resident, and Andrew Payseur, a guitar player and entrepreneurship major from Lincolnton, had been getting together to play old-time string band music informally at the A.K. Hinds University Center. One day, they saw some fraternity brothers pledging, and joked that they should start an “old-time fraternity.” That comment led to the idea of starting a real student organization for fans of the music. They put fliers up to attract other musicians, “but mostly we just got people’s attention by sitting around the UC playing our instruments,” said Ritter, a theater major. At 6 p.m., he works as a shop assistant in his program’s woodworking shop.

David Brewin, curatorial specialist at the Mountain Heritage Center, invited the group to gather at the museum for its weekly sessions. Brewin serves as the club’s unofficial coordinator and has helped the students get several performance dates off-campus.

When Thursdays roll around, they never know how many musicians are going to show up. Once, 14 people gathered to play, but a core group of four can usually be counted upon — Ritter; Payseur; Patrick Brady, a banjo player from Cullowhee and graduate student in anthropology; and Benjamin Rudolph, a guitar player from Asheville majoring in electronic and computer engineering. Sometimes local residents not associated with WCU join in, which always is a gratifying development, Ritter said. “One reason we started this club was because of community outreach,” he said. “This area is a hotbed of traditional music. We wanted to get some songs from the real deal.”

For George Frizzell ‘77 MA ‘81, who grew up in Jackson County near the WCU campus, history close to home has become his life’s work. As the head of Special Collections at Hunter Library, Frizzell oversees a collection and preservation of an abundance of rare and unique materials that provide researchers with a realm of possibilities. After 27 years, it’s a job he continues to enjoy.

“Heart and literature are great connectors that bring people together. Regardless of where you were born or grew up, you can develop great appreciation for a region,” he said. Even after all this time, it is still exciting to see people coming up with new and innovative questions and topics.

The collections focus on a variety of areas, notably the cultural and natural history of Southern Appalachia, Cherokee Indian history and culture, literary works of authors associated with the region, and — of course — the history of WCU. Among the treasures are family papers, organizational records, photographs, postcards, books and ephemeral publications.

University students, faculty members, historians, literary authors, genealogists and local residents are finding out about and using the rare and unique materials on the library’s second floor. Producers for the recent Ken Burns documentary “The National Parks: America’s Best Idea,” traveled to WCU to see the library’s historical photographs of mountain life and the environment, choosing several that appeared in the Great Smoky Mountains segment of the PBS special. A selection from Special Collections of the work of George Mass, who captured mountain scenes from the early 1900s in beautiful photographs, was exhibited last fall at the WCU Fine Art Museum. Ron Rash, Parris Distinguished Professor of Appalachian Culture, is among a growing list of authors of historical fiction who have consulted Frizzell and used the library’s resources. “George’s generous sharing of knowledge was crucial as I did research for my novel ‘Serena,’” Rash said. Scholar Elizabeth Courndel Martinez used documents from the library in her 2007 biography of Josefina Niggli, WCU theater instructor and Mexican-American author. (See related story on Page 12)

The increased interest in Special Collections pleases Frizzell and his assistant, Jason Brady ‘99, who want to spread the word about the historical resources available to the public, both in the collection’s reading room and online. In recent years, an expanding presence online has brought the collections to the attention of a wider audience. Digital collections feature an exhibit on the life and work of Horace Kephart, an author and former librarian who moved to Western North Carolina and helped establish the Great Smoky Mountains National Park; the Cherokee Phoenix newspaper, printed in the Cherokee language and in English; letters from the Civil War period; photographs of area schools; and a historical travel component of the library’s Craft Revival Web site, a digital history of a movement that started in the late 1900s to revive handcraft among the mountain people.

“Ultimately, we are hoping to help preserve the collective memory of the region,” said Frizzell. “We could not do this without the generosity of those who have contributed materials to the collection and the interest of the people who use them in their research.”
A renowned Darwin scholar leads a tour of the islands where the famed naturalist made his first evolutionary observations

By TERAESA KILLIAN TATE

The story of Charles Darwin and the Galapagos Islands is often misunderstood, said Jim Costa, professor of biology and director of Highlands Biological Station. When Darwin observed the giant tortoises, mockingbirds, and other flora and fauna on the islands in 1835, he did not grasp how important what he saw would be to the work for which he is known – “The Origin of Species.” It was months after Darwin’s visit that, in retrospect, he connected the island observations to the concept of evolution and, even later, to natural selection – the mechanism for evolution presented in his book.

“What’s interesting is to try to see the specific plants and animals of the Galapagos through Darwin’s eyes at a time when he didn’t realize their uniqueness or the lessons they hold,” said Costa, who led a tour to the Galapagos this fall at the invitation of the Harvard Museum of Natural History in partnership with Lindblad/National Geographic Expeditions. The trip was one of dozens Costa, a renowned Darwin scholar who authored “The Annotated Origin,” took near and far in 2009 to present at celebrations in honor of the bicentennial of Darwin’s birth and the 150th anniversary of the publication of “Origin.”

“I was extremely excited to see the Galapagos landscape that Darwin memorialized so evocatively in his book “Voyage of the Beagle,”” said Costa. “I was keen to see some of the places and, of course, the fascinating organisms that Darwin saw during his visit and get a sense of the varied landscape that Darwin experienced – from vast desolate lava plains to lush mountaintop forests. In another respect, I was excited to experience the Galapagos as remote island archipelago. Oceanic islands are fascinating natural laboratories for ecological and evolutionary processes.”
Josefina Niggli earns recognition for her place in WCU history

By JILL INGRAM MA ’08

PHOTO CREDIT: North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina Library at Chapel Hill.

When Steve Carlisle ’73 arrived on the campus of Western Carolina University from his hometown of Hendersonville in the fall semester of 1966, he had his future mapped. “I was a history major, wanting to go back to my local high school and become a basketball coach and history teacher,” Carlisle recounted. “That was my dream.”

An encounter with Western Carolina drama instructor Josefina Niggli rerouted those dreams. Carlisle stopped thinking of theater as a hobby and committed himself to acting. More than 40 years later, Carlisle has worked with Susan Sarandon, Paul Newman, Burt Reynolds, James Garner and Jack Lemon, among others.

Niggli had that effect on people. Small in stature – perhaps 5-foot-2-inches in heels – Niggli arrived at Western Carolina in 1956 as an established novelist, poet, screenwriter and playwright. “Theater was a special thing to her, and she made it a special thing to us,” said Luther Jones ’74 MAEd ’82, a former student who made a career in theater, film and television; his movie credits include “Patch Adams,” “My Fellow Americans” and “The Legend of Bagger Vance.”

A Woman of Many Roles

Born in Monterrey, Mexico, in July 1910 to parents of European descent, Niggli earned her undergraduate degree from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio in 1931 and a master’s degree in drama from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in 1937.

She spent the 1930s and 1940s active in radio, television and film, and writing plays, short stories, novels and screenplays. A forerunner in the literature of Mexico, Niggli wrote in English and revealed Mexican life from an insider’s perspective. She once wrote: “When I was a young kid,
starting out as a writer, I had a shining goal. I was going to present Mexico and the Mexicans as they had never before been presented.”

In 1945, Niggli published “Mexican Village,” a collection of 10 short stories, parts of it were adapted into “Somborens,” a 1953 major motion picture from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer starring Ricardo Montalban and Cyd Charisse. Niggli co‐wrote the screenplay, and two later novels also were well received.

Education was important to Niggli. She was a graduate of the Columbia University School of Journalism, received radio training at New York University and studied acting in Europe. She held positions at Chapel Hill and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro before joining the faculty of Western Carolina.

Cullowhee's Grande Dame

Josefina Niggli, who taught journalism in addition to drama, made a big impression at the mountain school. Chain-smoking Marlboro cigarettes, clicking her fingertips like castanets, offering stage direction from the seat of a red recliner positioned in the theater aisle, she was fascinating, imperial, dramatic, magical, revolutionary.

Niggli introduced a climate of professionalism in WCU’s theater program that allowed her students to graduate highly trained and ready to work. Her classes studied classical acting, dramatic structure, period and style. They studied Shakespeare, Molier and Ibsen. They performed contemporary Broadway hits. Niggli’s productions were so popular that – despite a two‐lane, winding road west of Balsams – people drove from Asheville to attend.

Niggli retired in 1976 and remained in Cullowhee. She died in 1983, leaving money, property and personal effects in the form of a $10,000 gift, at that time the largest single donation to the university. University centers and academic departments have committed to integrating Niggli into coursework and coordinating projects in her honor (see sidebar). The university also has named her the recipient of a posthumous honorary doctorate.

A Turn in the Spotlight

Now, WCU is formally recognizing Niggli’s vast contributions for the 100th year since her birth and amid growing academic interest, with a biography and two compilations of Niggli’s work published since 2005. A January “celebration premiere” was intended to “really kick up attention for the spring semester,” Hensley said. It included an invited reception and a performance by students and Kathleen Wright, professor emeritus of communication. Wright, whose tenure briefly overlapped Niggli’s, portrayed “Miss Niggli,” as her former students still call her, in a costume created by Lexanne Deaver ’09.

Deaver, of Canton, studied costume design at WCU with the help of a Josefina Niggli Scholarship. She lives in New York and occasionally works for famed costume designer William Ivey Long. She volunteered to design the Niggli costume – a black‐and‐pink dress and “an elegant little black shawl” – because she wanted to repay Niggli’s generosity. “I was really thankful that I had the opportunity to create the costume,” Deaver said. “A lot of students get the scholarship, but not all the students get the opportunity to show appreciation for it.”

While the yearlong program is primarily to demonstrate Niggli’s ongoing legacy to current students – “We want to keep learning front and center,” Hensley said – one event is of special interest to alumni: a reunion and performance planned for July 8-10. “Since the actual anniversary of her birth is in July, we decided that was a good time to allow alumni and others who were devoted to Ms. Niggli to come to campus,” Hensley said. The centerpiece of the weekend will be a performance (the location is yet to be determined) directed by Carlisle and featuring Niggli’s former students. “This is going to be an inside look at how Josefina affected the lives of her former students,” Carlisle said. “It’s going to be a love‐in – laughter, tears, hugging. These people are just itching to get back here and honor her.”

Many participants learned of the event through the social networking site Facebook. A link to that page can be found on WCU’s Josefina Niggli site, niggli.wcu.edu. “The Facebook page had more than 100 fans in less than two weeks. People found it pretty quickly,” Hensley said. “We have managed to create a terrific communication network.”

Among campus events to celebrate the life of Josefina Niggli (top left), clockwise from top right, an A Turn in the Spotlight

Carol Burton ’87 MAEd ’89

and Life.” University centers and academic departments have discussed recognition of Niggli beyond renaming the Little Theatre in her honor. A planned for July 8-10. “Since the actual anniversary of her birth is in July, we decided that was a good time to allow alumni and others who were devoted to Ms. Niggli to come to campus,” Hensley said. The centerpiece of the weekend will be a performance (the location is yet to be determined) directed by Carlisle and featuring Niggli’s former students. “This is going to be an inside look at how Josefina affected the lives of her former students,” Carlisle said. “It’s going to be a love‐in – laughter, tears, hugging. These people are just itching to get back here and honor her.”

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CALLING MISS NIGGLI’S STUDENTS: Niggli’s former students and others interested in learning more about the July reunion should contact Glenda Hensley at the Office of Undergraduate Studies at ghensley@wcu.edu or 828.227.2786.

NIGGLI HAPPENINGS

Events and projects at Western Carolina University to commemorate author and teacher Josefina Niggli include:

• A fall 2009 roundtable radio interview of former Niggli students, friends and co‐workers, hosted by Don Connelly, head of the communication department, and intended to illuminate her personal side. The interview aired on WWCU‐FM and is also available online.

• An oral history project from the department of history.

• An alternative spring break to Niggli’s birthplace coordinated by the Center for Service Learning.

• A March 10 dinner conference, sponsored by the Women’s Studies Program, featuring author and Niggli scholar Elizabeth Conrod Martinez as the keynote speaker and including a screening of “Somborens.”

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Emily Collman, an elementary education and Spanish major from the Gaston County town of Dallas, always knew she wanted to go to college to learn how to be a teacher. What she didn’t know was how she would pay for it, or if she had what it took to achieve her goal. That is, until she received the Taft and Malvery Botner Scholarship, which helped her pay tuition and fees, and which enabled her to gain the skills and self-confidence to succeed in the classroom, both as a student and as a student-teacher.

“I have known since the time I was 12 years old that I wanted to be a teacher,” said Collman, a senior. “Here at Western Carolina, I have found nationally regarded professors who care about me, not just as a student but as a person. Receiving the Botner Scholarship was a huge validation for me, because scholarships are not like birthday presents that you get for surviving another year. Scholarships are a pat on the back, an ‘atta-girl’ in recognition of your perseverance and hard work.”

For Brandon Robinson ’05, the fact that a university believed enough in the intellectual and academic ability of a first-generation college student from Mocksville to award him the History Excellence Scholarship gave him the self-esteem not only to earn a bachelor’s degree in history, but to work toward a master’s degree in history at WCU en route to the ultimate prize—a law degree.

“It’s obvious that receiving a scholarship helped me financially be able to attend the university,” Robinson said. “But it also signaled for me that point of confidence where I knew that Western Carolina University — and specifically the history department — had faith in me and my abilities, and they believed that I could come here and do great things and actualize my ambition of being a Renaissance man. You can have a lot of dreams like that when you come to college, but if you’re a first-generation undergraduate student like I was, when you have Ph.D.s and different committees and deans willing to invest in you and your intellectual abilities, that just sealed it for me.”

Those are just two examples of the types of stories heard time and again across the campus as students, faculty, staff, alumni and friends came together in October to celebrate what Chancellor John W. Bardo characterized as “a most historic day in the life of our university” – the successful conclusion of the first comprehensive fundraising campaign in the university’s 120 years.
Making a Difference in Student Lives

Thanks to the $51.8 million in contributions from benefactors who helped the university achieve its goal of $40 million in private support announced when the Campaign for Western Carolina was launched to the public in February 2007, more students like Collman and Robinson will be able to pursue their dreams of getting a college education, Bardo said.

“A university has never been a collection of buildings, although it is in buildings where we do much of our work. A university has never been a geographic space. A university is about people. And the better the people of a university, the better the university. No university is better than its faculty members, and no faculty member can touch the future unless he or she has the right type of students who care about the future, who want to make a difference in their world,” he said.

It is for that reason that the Campaign for Western Carolina did not focus on money for new buildings or land purchases. Instead, it focused on endowed professorships, endowed scholarship and programmatic support, Bardo said. “This campaign was about extraordinary opportunities for our faculty, for our staff and, most of all, for our students. It was about making it possible to bring the very best minds to the university and to bring those students.

That is why the majority of the dollars raised during the campaign are directed to student and faculty endowments. Thirty-four percent of contributions are earmarked for faculty endowments, including commitments for 24 new endowed distinguished professorships in fields ranging from educational leadership to construction management. Thirty percent of campaign gifts are directed to student endowments, including scholarships, and to support such wide-ranging student activities as travel abroad opportunities, participation in skills-based competitions against students from other universities, and internships or other opportunities.

For example, Andrew Blair, a senior from Liberty majoring in music education, was among only 30 students from across the nation selected to participate in a prestigious percussion class held in New York last summer under the direction of the world’s foremost marimba virtuoso, Leigh Howard Stevens. “It’s really a great honor as a musician and as a percussionist to be selected to participate,” said Blair, who performed selections on the marimba as part of the WCU Foundation’s annual scholarship luncheon during the week of campaign celebration activities in the fall. “I was studying with the father of our modern marimba techniques.”

Thanks to the Honors College Study Abroad Fund, Max DeGrove, son of WCU facilities management supervisor Andy DeGrove ’93 MIT ’84, was able to spend a summer in Shikoku, Japan, bicycling across the smallest of the nation’s four “big islands” and immersing himself in the culture.

“Thanks to the Honors College Study Abroad Fund enabled Max DeGrove (above, right) to bicycle across a Japanese island. Scholarship recipient and campaign donor Brandon Robinson ’05 (above, left) relaxes in the stacks of Hunter Library, where he spends much of his time reading for school and pleasure.

“My scholarship definitely helped me financially. I have an older brother and a younger brother, so I know my parents definitely appreciated it,” said Banner, from Conover. “But it’s also given me the opportunity to do more on campus. It has really freed me up to be able to take advantage of the college experience without having to worry about finances. I’ve been able to take a full course load, plus be heavily involved in the productions that the theater department does.”
Students Give Us Hope

It was concerns about students being able to afford college and about the quality of their educational experience that led Wesley Elingburg ’78, a retired chief financial officer with Laboratory Corp. of America, to contribute before, during and after the campaign. "It paines me when I hear stories of students who want to go to school but struggle financially to do so. I would like every student who wants to go to college to be able to do so without the burden of debt," said Elingburg, whose gifts to the university during the silent phase of the campaign led to establishment of the Wesley Elingburg Professorship of Business Innovation, a position now held by Louis Buck, a former executive at one of the nation’s largest investor-owned energy companies.

"Western Carolina gave me the foundation that led me through my adult life. When I came to the university, I did not know what I wanted to do with my life. But there were faculty here and faculty advisors who gave me that guidance. For that, I will be forever grateful," Elingburg said. "I’ve given back to Western Carolina. Anytime Western Carolina calls upon me, I am there, and I will always be there." And Elingburg continues to be a major contributor to the university. In 2009, he issued a challenge to encourage increased giving to WCU’s Loyalty Fund, which provides scholarships and other support for WCU students, faculty and programs (see Challenge Accepted on next page).

Elingburg is not alone in his desire to give back. Gifts to the campaign came from 9,564 donors from 48 states. Of those donors, 608 work at Western Carolina as faculty or staff. The majority of donors — 59 percent — were WCU alumni, with 5,681 individual alumni making contributions. Another 34 percent of contributors are not alumni, but are characterized as "friends of the university," with corporations, foundations and other benefactors making up the remaining 7 percent. Four groups achieved 100 percent participation in the campaign — the university’s board of trustees, the WCU Foundation board of directors, the WCU Executive Council and University Police. Joan MacNeill, former chair of the WCU board of trustees, said there is a reason why so many people from so many walks of life from across the country were willing to give to the Campaign for Western Carolina — a reason far more important than tax deductions or naming opportunities. "The secret is, for my husband and myself, we are the ones who feel blessed," said MacNeill. She accompanied Ashley Shemery, the recipient of the Joan and Malcolm MacNeill Scholarship, to a special lecture presented by the Jacksonville sophomore’s favorite professor after a special luncheon to thank scholarship donors. "For us, she’s really what it’s all about. Ashley has expressed her gratitude and thanks to us for the financial help she had received. But what she doesn’t know is we really thank her. She and students like Brandon and Christina have given us hope. They make us feel really good about the future."

ChALLENGE ACCEPTED

Donors are taking up an alum’s offer to match their gifts to the Loyalty Fund

By BILL STUDENC

It was just a few months ago that Wesley Elingburg ’78, a supporter of Western Carolina’s Loyalty Fund for 18 years, issued a challenge to other donors, backing up that challenge with an offer to match new and increased gifts of at least $1,000, up to a maximum of $50,000. Already, 23 people have taken him up on his challenge, making additional gifts to the Loyalty Fund that, when combined with his match, have resulted in an additional $73,283 to provide merit-based scholarships to WCU students.

Elingburg says he is pleased at the success of the Elingburg Challenge — and its role in extending the success of The Campaign for Western Carolina. "I haven’t quit smiling since I got on campus this morning," the retired chief financial officer with Laboratory Corp. of America said during a campaign celebration event in October. "I am so happy to be here today, and it’s such a privilege to be able to celebrate what has happened."

Cynthia Hamilton Beane ’71 is among those who have taken up Elingburg on his challenge. "I had given small amounts to the university each year for several years, but have long felt that I need to give more to my alma mater, to reconnect and to get more involved," said Beane, a partner in the accounting firm Beane Swaringen & Co. "Learning of the Wes Elingburg Challenge made me realize that now is the time to do what I have always intended to do."

Additional gifts made through the challenge are helping maintain the momentum of the first comprehensive fundraising effort at WCU. Although the campaign resulted in $51.8 million in contributions and pledges to the university, additional needs remain. "Giving back to the campus and the community, that’s what I want to do. I want to give back to afford opportunities to students — opportunities that, without our help, a lot of deserving students won’t get," Elingburg said. "How can we help as donors? We can help by giving back to institutions. Let’s think about writing that check. Think about the pleasure that you get from knowing that when you write that check to this institution, you are indeed helping a student."

FINANCIAL DOWNTURN WILL SLOW SUPPORT FOR CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT

A significant slowdown in the construction industry resulting from the nation’s lingering economic downturn has led to the recent declaration of bankruptcy by a beneficiary of Western Carolina.

Contributions from Joe W. Kimmel and his company, Kimmel & Associates, in 2005 led to the naming of the Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology.

"For more than a decade, Kimmel & Associates has been among the nation’s top firms in placing construction managers in the U.S. construction industry, one of the strongest segments of the American economy. Western Carolina University anticipates that the company will rebound as the national construction industry, among the hardest hit segments of the national economy in the current recession, returns to normal," said Clifton Metcalf, vice chancellor for advancement and external affairs.

"Delay in fulfilling commitments planned in the Kimmel gift will mean that fewer student scholarships and less program support — such as brochures and student participation in conferences or competitions — will be available during the interim," Metcalf said. Chancellors John W. Bardo expressed his sympathy for the Kimmels, who are among a large number of business men and women, and numerous U.S. companies, who are suffering economically. "The Kimmels are wonderful people with whom we have worked for a number of years and with whom we have a great relationship. They and many among the Kimmel & Associates leadership are close friends of the university and of many of us in the university family," Bardo said. "Our current concern is for the Kimmel family and their employees. As one does with family, we will take the long view of this trying time. We wish them all the best. We will stand by them in every way we can, and trust that there will be a brighter day in the world economy soon."

For more information on the Elingburg Challenge, visit loyaltyfund.wcu.edu, or contact Natalie Clark, at 828.227.3090 or nclark@wcu.edu.
An aphasia expert has joined the communication sciences and disorders faculty as the first Catherine Brewer Smith Distinguished Professor

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

Western North Carolina residents participating in an aphasia support group are benefiting from the expertise of a teacher and researcher who literally wrote the book on the disorder. Nancy Helm-Estabrooks, one of the nation's top experts in adult neurological communication disorders, was appointed WCU's first Catherine Brewer Smith Distinguished Professor of Communication Disorders in July. The focus of Helm-Estabrooks' research and writing over the years has been aphasia, a communication disorder, typically caused by a stroke or other brain injury, that is related to understanding and producing language.

In addition to teaching courses in aphasia and cognitive-communicative disorders, Helm-Estabrooks trains graduate students to work with individuals affected by aphasia who attend meetings of the Asheville Area Aphasia Support Group. As part of that effort, she also leads discussions for family members and friends who are living with aphasia through a loved one. During weekly meetings at CarePartners Health Services in Asheville, the support group offers free individual and group therapy for those who are no longer eligible for insurance coverage for rehabilitation services.

Before coming to WCU, Helm-Estabrooks was a research professor in the division of speech and hearing sciences in the School of Medicine at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, where she continues to hold an adjunct position. She was a clinical investigator for 32 years with the renowned Harold Goodglass Aphasia Research Center in Boston, and is co-author of the highly regarded "Manual of Aphasia and Aphasia Therapy." Treatment methods and tests developed by Helm-Estabrooks and her colleagues, are now used by clinicians around the world.

Baby Drew, retired associate professor of communication disorders who helps lead the treatment program for the Asheville support group, said Helm-Estabrooks has a "special understanding of persons with aphasia" that is well-received by family and friends. "Nancy is a dynamic clinician and has intuitive knowledge about how the brain has been affected by aphasia, and she is indefatigable in her energy to assist those who have the disorder," Drew said.

Department head Bill Ogletree calls Helm-Estabrooks a "wonderful role model" for both students and faculty. "Her scholarly and clinical impact has laid the groundwork for future generations of researchers and practitioners, and her international reputation in the area of adult neurogenic communication disorders is simply second to none," Ogletree said.

A gift of $300,000 from the estate of the late Catherine Brewer Smith provided funding for the distinguished professorship in communication disorders. It was one in a series of family contributions made to honor the memory of Smith's father, Albert Dudley Brewer, who attended the university. A native of Marion, Ind., Smith owned and managed a motel in Madeira Beach, Fla., for 26 years. She maintained residencies in Franklin and Yanktock, Fla., for 26 years. She maintained residencies in Franklin and Zanyock, Fla. WCU combined $250,000 of Smith's gift with matching state funds to establish the $500,000 professorship, while the remaining $50,000 was used to create an endowed fund that supports activities of the department of communication sciences and disorders.

The individuals responsible for directing the fundraising campaign, which was publicly launched in 2007, insisted on thinking big: $20 million was the initial, unannounced goal. Conditioned perhaps by my 50-year knowledge of the need to penny-pinching, I wondered if the university was campaigning more for embarrassment than funds. Nonetheless, as the campaign progressed, the $20 million target was reset three times: $25 million, $30 million, and finally, a giddy $40 million. When WCU celebrated the results of its campaign on Oct. 15, 2009, Chancellor John Bardo announced that the campaign had generated nearly $52 million.

The astonishing success of the campaign confirmed that WCU is capable of raising funds from private sources to support the "idea." Dean Bird recounted in "Western Carolina College: The Progress of an Idea" that WCU is capable of raising funds from private sources to support the "idea." Dean Bird recounted in "Western Carolina College: The Progress of an Idea," Certainly, the $5.8 million raised will help students and faculty improve teaching and learning, and it will help the university attract even stronger faculty and students, serve more effectively the broader community, and enhance further the quality of the institution's academic and athletics programs.

But in the opinion of this appreciative alumna and recently retired 40-year employee, the most pleasing and significant outcome of the campaign is confirmation that, in the eyes of alumni, friends, corporations and foundations, Western Carolina University is a vibrant, dynamic institution that is realizing its goal of offering opportunities to those who aspire to make a difference in their world, and is therefore worthy of private fiscal support.

How much is this widespread sentiment worth to WCU? Certainly, more than $52 million. And that makes sense for the university's future fundraising campaigns and the continued "Progress of an Idea" that began way back in 1889.

Gurney E. Chambers '61 is dean emeritus of the College of Education and Allied Professions and served as chair of the faculty/staff component of the Family Gifts Division during the Campaign for Western Carolina.
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FORMERLY: Patricia of Queen Scholar - served on the Chancellor’s Inauguration Committee; vice president, Young Democrats Club; Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity. Physique, Pan Hille, Lab Club. Won Mr. in America - Americans and Europeans. ODI College student to the North Carolina. 1972-73.'(1) Wilson Hall of Fame. 1969: Senior Sportswriters Association of Black College America. Co-captain. CABY: Walk on and cross country. FCW: 1969 to 1973. California Ripper. Formerly: June 1973 to 1975. 1976-77: Street Corner Committee. 1976: Member. 1978: Member. 1980: Member. 1982: Member. 1984: Member. 1986: Member. 1988: Member. 1990: Member. 1992: Member. 1994: Member. 1996: Member. 1998: Member. 2000: Member. 2002: Member. 2004: Member. 2006: Member. 2008: Member. 2010: Member. 2012: Member. 2014: Member. 2016: Member. 2018: Member. 2020: Member. 2022: Member. 2024: Member. 2026: Member. 2028: Member. 2030: Member. 2032: Member. 2034: Member. 2036: Member. 2038: Member. 2040: Member. 2042: Member. 2044: Member. 2046: Member. 2048: Member. 2050: Member. 2052: Member. 2054: Member. 2056: Member. 2058: Member. 2060: Member. 2062: Member. 2064: Member. 2066: Member. 2068: Member. 2070: Member. 2072: Member. 2074: Member. 2076: Member. 2078: Member. 2080: Member. 2082: Member. 2084: Member. 2086: Member. 2088: Member. 2090: Member. 2092: Member. 2094: Member. 2096: Member. 2098: Member. 2000: Member. 2002: Member. 2004: Member. 2006: Member. 2008: Member. 2010: Member. 2012: Member. 2014: Member. 2016: Member. 2018: Member. 2020: Member. 2022: Member. 2024: Member. 2026: Member. 2028: Member. 2030: Member. 2032: Member. 2034: Member. 2036: Member. 2038: Member. 2040: Member. 2042: Member. 2044: Member. 2046: Member. 2048: Member. 2050: Member. 2052: Member. 2054: Member. 2056: Member. 2058: Member. 2060: Member. 2062: Member. 2064: Member. 2066: Member. 2068: Member. 2070: Member. 2072: Member. 2074: Member. 2076: Member. 2078: Member. 2080: Member. 2082: Member. 2084: Member. 2086: Member. 2088: Member. 2090: Member. 2092: Member. 2094: Member. 2096: Member. 2098: Member. 2000: Member. 2002: Member. 2004: Member. 2006: Member. 2008: Member. 2010: Member. 2012: Member. 2014: Member. 2016: Member. 2018: Member. 2020: Member. 2022: Member. 2024: Member. 2026: Member. 2028: Member. 2030: Member. 2032: Member. 2034: Member. 2036: Member. 2038: Member. 2040: Member. 2042: Member. 2044: Member. 2046: Member. 2048: Member. 2050: Member. 2052: Member. 2054: Member. 2056: Member. 2058: Member. 2060: Member. 2062: Member. 2064: Member. 2066: Member. 2068: Member. 2070: Member. 2072: Member. 2074: Member. 2076: Member. 2078: Member. 2080: Member. 2082: Member. 2084: Member. 2086: Member. 2088: Member. 2090: Member. 2092: Member. 2094: Member. 2096: Member. 2098: Member. 2000: Member. 2002: Member. 2004: Member. 2006: Member. 2008: Member. 2010: Member. 2012: Member. 2014: Member. 2016: Member. 2018: Member. 2020: Member. 2022: Member. 2024: Member. 2026: Member. 2028: Member. 2030: Member. 2032: Member. 2034: Member. 2036: Member. 2038: Member. 2040: Member. 2042: Member. 2044: Member. 2046: Member. 2048: Member. 2050: Member. 2052: Member. 2054: Member. 2056: Member. 2058: Member. 2060: Member. 2062: Member. 2064: Member. 2066: Member. 2068: Member. 2070: Member.
Four former Catamounts with ties as far back as the 1950s and a former coach who helped mentor athletes in three sports are the newest members of the Western Carolina University Athletics Hall of Fame following induction ceremonies held in November.

Members of the five-person induction class, the 20th all-time at WCU, are Bob Ray ’57 (men’s basketball), Steve Spradling ’71 (football), Laura Echols Wellmon ’02 MPT ’04 (women’s basketball), Johnny Wike (football and golf coach) and Steve Yates (football).

Ray played basketball for Western Carolina from 1951 through 1957, including a two-year break for military service in the U.S. Army, before returning as an assistant coach for seven years. The Buncombe County native, who concluded his playing career ranked second on the school’s career scoring chart with 1,187 points, still holds the 22nd spot on WCU’s all-time scoring list.

Ray returned to Cullowhee in 1962 to become the school’s first-ever full-time assistant basketball coach, a position he held until 1969. He helped recruit and coach 17 all-conference players while on staff. Following a distinguished academic career at WCU, Ray went on to earn graduate degrees from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a doctorate from the University of Georgia. After his coaching days, he served as head of WCU’s department of health, physical education and recreation from 1982 to 1993.

Spradling was a three-year starter at wide receiver for the Catamount football team from 1967 to 1970, helping WCU compile a record of 19-8. The Pumpkins Beach, Fla., native twice finished among the NAIA’s top pass receivers, including ranking fourth with 46 catches in 1969 – helping him earn All-North Carolina Collegiate, NAIA and Associated Press All-America honorable mention plaudits. All told, Spradling hauled in 95 career passes for 2,023 yards in three seasons, which included 1,075 yards in 1969, a mark that ranks sixth in the school’s single-season record books. He also continues to hold the WCU record with seven consecutive 100-yard receiving performances.

Wellmon, who played at WCU from 1999 to 2003 as Laura Echols, finished her career as one of the most honored players in Catamount women’s basketball history. The program’s second-leading all-time scorer with 1,765 points, she also ranks seventh on the career rebounding charts with 790 boards in her four-year career. Wellmon still ranks on 10 career statistical charts, including second on field goals made (718), and third on field goals attempted (1,421).

A native of Conyers, Ga., Wellmon remains WCU’s second-leading all-time scorer with 1,765 points, a mark that ranks sixth in the school’s single-season record books. She also ranks seventh on the career rebounding charts with 790 boards in her four-year career. Wellmon still ranks on 10 career statistical charts, including second on field goals made (718), and third on field goals attempted (1,421).

A native of Conyers, Ga., Wellmon remains WCU’s only All-Southern Conference selection, garnering first-team plaudits in 2000, ’01 and ’02. She also was a three-time SoCon Player of the Week during her career and earned Western Carolina’s Female Student-Athlete of the Year Award in 2001-02. A two-time Verizon Academic All-District Team selection in 2001 and ’02, she graduated from WCU with honors, majoring in chemistry with a minor in psychology, and also earned her master’s degree from WCU in physical therapy.

Wike, a native of Mount Holly, spent more than 30 years of his life in service to Western Carolina coaching football and golf. He worked for 21 of those years as an assistant football coach (1964-73, 1984-94), serving under four head coaches and helping recruit several high-profile athletes, including those who would go on to play in the NFL and advance to the Super Bowl.

When Bob Waters arrived at WCU in 1969 as the head football coach, he decided the Athletic Department needed to reinstate its dormant men’s golf program. From 1971 to 1973, Wike held the dual role of assistant football coach and head golf coach. Wike spent 1974 to 1977 as head football coach at Carson-Newman College in Tennessee, and afterward spent six seasons as head coach at Calloway High School.

Wike returned to the WCU football staff in February 1984 as defensive coordinator, rejoining his role as Waters’ chief recruiter. In 1991, he again took on duties as head coach of the men’s golf team, a position he held through 2004. He retired from the football staff in 1995, the same year he launched the women’s golf program. He retired as head coach of the women’s golf team in 1998.

A member of the Catamount football team from 1971 to 1974, Yates was a two-time Associated Press All-America selection, receiving second-team accolades in 1972 and a first-team nod in 1974. The Cabarrus County native was one of three line backers named to WCU’s 20th Century All-Time Football team compiled back in 2000.

Called “the most intense football player I’ve ever coached” by Bob Waters during the 1974 season, Yates continues to rank 10th on the Catamounts’ career tackles charts with 306 total hits, including 191 solo stops. He was the leading tackler on two teams that finished in the Associated Press top 10, including WCU’s first NCAA playoff team in 1974. The Catamounts posted a 25-9-2 record with him in the lineup. His 25 quarterback sacks also rank him third on the career leaderboard.
were going to see their friend for the last time. But Keith and that came much sooner than she expected.

disease, or amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS), a progressive, mind-boggling. LeClair’s won-lost mark at Western Carolina was 229-135-2. He was 232-96-1 at ECU, guiding the Pirates to three consecutive NCAA regional tournament appearances before stepping down.

Despite the amazing record on the baseball field, it is his battle with Lou Gehrig’s disease that is an important piece of his legacy and that promises to make the book a great read. “Even after he was unable to move or talk, he reached such heights,” she said. “Hearing his stories was gripping.”

LeClair’s relationships with Leggett and Raleigh were special. Bradsher said the emotion that came from Leggett was intense as she sat in his Clemson office and interviewed him for the book. “He called Keith LeClair his son,” she said. “Hearing his stories was gripping.”

After graduating from Fall Mountain Regional High School in Langdon, N.H., LeClair became one ofLeggett’s top players at Western Carolina. After his college career, LeClair agreed with the Atlanta Braves but chose not to report to the team’s minor league spring training, opting instead to work as an assistant coach with Leggett in 1989. When Leggett went to Clemson as an assistant in 1993, LeClair succeeded him as the head man at Western Carolina at the tender age of 27.

LeClair’s relationship with Raleigh was no less special. After LeClair was housebound with the disease, Raleigh made the six-hour drive across North Carolina from Cullowhee to Greenville every February to visit him. Raleigh, now the head coach at the University of Tennessee, said even when the disease robbed LeClair of his ability to talk or move, it could not take his sense of humor. During one of Raleigh’s visits, ECU’s new baseball venue being named Clark-LeClair Stadium. Raleigh told LeClair it should have been named LeClair-Clark Stadium. But the William H. Clark family of Greenville had donated $1.5 million toward the facility, and LeClair quickly typed on his computer screen, “Money is better than legacy.”

Those who knew Keith LeClair might argue otherwise, and it is his legacy that is captured in Bradsher’s manuscript. Reprinted in edited format from the Rutland (Vt.) Herald.
HOOP DREAMS

Women's basketball team draws inspiration from a special 'guest coach'

By BESSIE DIETRIC OGGINS '06 MA '09

As the season began for Western Carolina University’s women’s basketball team, players and coaches received some extra motivation from one very special “guest coach for a day.” Madison “Madi” Hornbuckle. A student at nearby Cullowhee Valley Elementary School, Madi suffers from glioblastoma multiforme, a common and aggressive type of brain tumor.

Karen Clarke ‘83 MAEd ’86, Madi’s school counselor, said she developed the “guest coach” idea as basketball season started because she saw how sport Madi was about not being able to play basketball. “I wanted her to meet the WCU basketball team and connect with them,” said Clarke.

One phone call to Coach Karen Middleton was all it took. “Karen invited us to meet the players and be at a practice,” said Clarke. “Then Madi could come to the game the next night.”

When Madi attended the practice prior to the game, she was named “guest coach for a day,” Middleton said. “Madi is an inspiration to us all,” she said. “She always has a smile on her face and is very enthusiastic and excited to watch and follow our team.”

Among the players to connect with Madi was Jessica Jackson, a senior guard. “Madi had a major impact on our team, which downed Wofford by a score of 71-65. “Seeing her face and Madi’s face, I was extremely happy to see her.”

And her presence at the game had a solid impact on the team, which downed Wofford by a score of 71-65. “Seeing Madi at the game just put life in perspective for everyone,” said Jackson. “When we arrived at the game and saw Madi’s face, I was extremely happy to see her.”

On an early season game night, Madi was the team’s guest of honor and had a special place on the bench. “We knew that because of Madi’s condition, it was uncertain if she would be able to come to our game on Friday, so we were hoping that she had a special time at practice with the team,” said Jackson. “When we arrived at the game and saw Madi’s face, I was extremely happy to see her.”

And her presence at the game had a solid impact on the team, which downed Wofford by a score of 71-65. “Seeing Madi at the game just put life in perspective for everyone,” said Jackson. “Madi’s character and personality has inspired us all to work hard and enjoy each day we are able to play basketball because we never know when it will be taken away from us.”

Madi and Middleton share more than just a jersey number—they share a mutual admiration. “Madi is a true winner and is someone who has captured our team’s heart and inspired us,” said Middleton. “She has an open invitation to attend practice and any games she is able to come to.”

Along with being in the huddles at practice, Madi also received gear from the coaches. “When Madi did play basketball, she wore No. 20, and that had a special connection to our coach because that was also her basketball number,” said Jackson.

For more information, contact the Office of Development at 828.227.7124. Memorial contributions may be made to the Durr Scholarship Fund by sending a check, with Durr Scholarship in the memo line, made payable to the WCU Foundation at 201 H.F. Robinson, Cullowhee, N.C. 28723.
A New England artist foundation and residency program grows under a professor’s guidance

By SARAH KUCHARSKI

Gaily colored petals of long-stemmed cosmos lilt along on the sea-swept winds that blow across Great Cranberry Island, off the coast of Maine, where Patricia Bailey, an associate professor of art at Western Carolina University, directs artist residencies and carries out other responsibilities as president of the Heliker-LaHotan Foundation. Formed in 1993, the foundation is dedicated to the artistic vision of two painters, John Heliker and Robert LaHotan, who made their home on the island. After Heliker’s death, LaHotan charged the foundation’s board specifically with forming a residency program that would enable artists to continue coming to the island to find inspiration and to create. And after LaHotan’s death in 2002, Bailey, a longtime friend of both artists, worked diligently as a leader on the foundation’s board to open the Heliker-LaHotan home and studios to artists.

The foundation welcomed its first four residents in 2006. In 2007, there were eight artists; 11 in 2008; and 14 in 2009. Among them was printmaker Joseph Norman, who said he came during a transitional period in his life to learn to work again in silence and be comfortable alone and with his thoughts. The self-proclaimed night owl would come alive when the sun set against a low tree line, casting a warm pink light across the tidal basin and filling the studio with the glow of evening. In his first week alone he created 30 works. The island studios offer a wealth of natural light, views of the tidal basin and solitude on the private shore, which is what Heliker and LaHotan wanted. “This place is so supportive of uninterrupted work,” said Bailey.

The foundation has a growing relationship with WCU. Tara Jones ’08 has served as Heliker-LaHotan facility coordinator and Bailey’s assistant. The foundation’s Web site, www.heliker-lahotan.org, is maintained by WCU alumnus Andrew Kinnear ’06. In addition, the foundation donated a 1989 Heliker painting titled “The Visit II” to Western Carolina’s Fine Art Museum. The work, hung in 2005 during an inaugural exhibition “Worldviews: Selections from the Permanent Collection,” helps anchor the focus of the collection, and will greatly strengthen the museum’s teaching mission, said Martin DWit, founding director of the museum.

“As we examine the beautiful work of Mr. Heliker, we can discuss his early roots as a modernist, and trace his extraordinary journey as artist and teacher, the influence of which continues to this day,” DWiti said. The Fine Art Museum may in coming years become host to an exhibit of some of Heliker’s works. In addition, DWiti has a special connection to the Heliker-LaHotan Foundation. Both his brothers, each of whom is a painter, completed residencies on Great Cranberry Island. The cultural round robin also has meant that artists such as painter and printmaker Norman have appeared as visiting artists at WCU, and through this connection learned about the Heliker-LaHotan Foundation and its residency opportunities.

“The artists’ vibrancy during residencies is contagious,” Bailey said. Dinnertime conversations welcome lively discussion about academia, teaching methods and, of course, art. After time spent on the island, Bailey, who teaches drawing and painting, comes back to her WCU classroom with a renewed sense of purpose. “I’m energized,” Bailey said. “I’m energized by the artists I have the privilege of working with.”
**THE SECRET OF HIS SUCCESS**

From bagging groceries to leading one of Forbes magazine’s best companies in America

**By CHRISTY MARTIN ‘71 MA ‘78**

Jim Lanning ’80 got a job bagging groceries when he was a teenager barely old enough for a work permit. Lanning worked afternoons and weekends at a small grocery store in the Skyland community only a few miles from his school. By the time he got his high school diploma, the store also had given him an education. He already knew more than most boys his age about long hours and hard work. He also had discovered his affinity for the retail environment, and so he stayed on.

Lanning, winner of WCU’s 2009 Professional Achievement Award, is now the president and chief operating officer of that supermarket chain, Ingles Markets Inc., the Asheville-based company ranked by Forbes as one of the 400 Best Big Companies in America.

“We’re proud to see our president, Jim Lanning, receive WCU’s Professional Achievement Award,” said Robert P. Ingle, founder and CEO of the supermarket chain. “Jim truly grew up in our business, working day and night while completing his education at WCU. His leadership has provided our company with the growth and direction needed to succeed in today’s market.”

Lanning oversees operations in 202 stores, many of them three times larger than the one where he started work in 1975. In almost 40 years with Ingles, he has held key roles at every level of management in several states. He has watched the stores grow from 30,000-square-foot buildings providing basic staples, meats and produce to giant one-stop shopping centers with gourmet groceries, organic foods, pharmacies, card and book sections, bakeries, floral departments, media centers, delicatessens, coffee bars, self-checkouts and fuel centers. Ingles, employing 19,000 people, has supermarkets in North and South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia and Alabama. Annual sales top $3.5 billion.

“It’s wonderful to have such a strong leader for a boss,” said Cindi Brooks, Ingles vice president for human resources, who has worked with Lanning for many years. “Jim is caring, extremely hard-working, inspiring and a pleasure to work with.”

Employees in the six states where Ingles has stores admire and respect Lanning, an Asheville native, who regularly makes store visits during his long work week. He makes time to talk with them and is interested in hearing not only about their sales performance but also their personal lives.

“Getting to know the employees and their families was the tradition started and cultivated by our founder, who has always encouraged his store managers to know and appreciate what’s going on in their employees’ lives,” said Lanning. “And for me, when I’m in the stores, I’m amazed when I talk to employees at how often I hear about WCU – someone has a child there, or is going to school there, or a family member has just graduated.”

Lanning has never worked for any company but Ingles. Two years after he got that bagboy job, he was promoted to stock clerk. He was grocery manager by the time he graduated from high school. Others his age with a steady job and opportunities for advancement might have decided to forego college. “But for my mother and father, who have been part of everything in my life, there was never a question of if I would go to college. I was definitely going to college. It was just a matter of when,” he said.

He kept working at Ingles, enrolled at WCU and, taking advantage of as many night classes and extension offerings as he could, managed to graduate with a bachelor’s degree in business administration in less than four years. After he graduated, Lanning kept moving up at Ingles. He was continually challenged to take on larger stores, and he showed results. In addition to Asheville, he held Ingles positions in Gaffney, Sumter and Mooresville, S.C.; and in Winder and Hull, Ga., outside Athens, where he was a district manager responsible for northeastern Georgia. In 2003, Robert Ingle named him president and he returned to Asheville, where he lives with his wife Melody and their son and daughter.

He provides support for pressing needs in Ingles’ hometown communities and helped organize the company’s “Tools for Schools” program, which has donated more than $7.9 million in educational equipment to schools. Lanning also is involved with his company’s donation program to food banks to help fight hunger among children and families in the communities where Ingles stores are located.

“Jim’s career advice for young people entering the job market? ‘There may be tough times economically, but there are always opportunities for people who are willing to start small and work their way up,’” Lanning said. “‘They need to be flexible and willing to accept a position that may be a step or two below what they may have envisioned for themselves. But there’s light at the end of the tunnel, and if that’s where they want to be, getting a good education and being willing to work will get them there.’

“Jim truly grew up in our business, working day and night while completing his education at WCU. His leadership has provided our company with the growth and direction needed to succeed in today’s market.”

— Robert P. Ingle, founder, Ingles Markets
RYAN’S SONG
A renowned geologist traces his career path back to summer programs in Cullowhee
By CHRISTY MARTIN ’71 MA ’78

Jeffrey Ryan ’83 first came to WCU when he was in elementary school and lived in Raleigh. For several summers, Ryan attended The Cullowhee Experience, a summer enrichment program for academically gifted youngsters. Years later, his experience with “the Experience” helped him make an important decision.

“When the time came to go to college, WCU was a campus I already knew. It was far enough away from home to make me feel like I was getting out into the world,” he said. “I decided to come back.”

As a freshman, Ryan’s interests leaned toward science and creative writing. He wrote short stories and became editor of the student literary magazine. But in the classroom, it was geology that won him over.

Led by professor Steve Yurkovich, Ryan and his classmates went on field excursions out and about in the mountains. Sometimes it seemed they also were going inside, around and under them. It was a geological journey to the center of the earth, of sorts, by way of the Southern Appalachians. “We went to quarries and old copper mines. There were all kinds of resources to investigate in the region. We were always rooting around for rocks,” he said.

The rock-hounding of his college days was a stepping-stone to his life’s work. He graduated from WCU with high honors, earned a doctorate from Columbia University, and landed a post-doctoral fellowship at the prestigious Carnegie Institution of Washington. Afterwards, he was quickly hired by the University of South Florida and has been there since. One of the USF’s top researchers, he also chairs the geology department.

“Jeff is an extraordinary person,” said Yurkovich. “As a student, he was self-motivated and always exceptional.”

Ryan has won many accolades for his excellent teaching, including Florida Professor of the Year. He brings his undergraduate and graduate students together to work as teams in the lab, and promotes science and science education at every opportunity. His long-standing association with Yurkovich and other WCU geology professors has benefited many WCU students invited to Tampa to experience the team’s work.

Geologists seek to understand Earth’s internal forces that create earthquakes, build mountains or produce volcanoes. Ryan’s work focuses on what happens miles below the surface to trigger volcanic eruptions, the geochemistry of mantle rocks and what happens at subduction zones, those areas where tectonic plates converge. He also studies the formation of lead, gold, silver and iron. His research has received more than $2.2 million in grants, most of it from the National Science Foundation.

Today, the recipient of the WCU Alumni Association’s 2009 Academic Achievement Award who once clamored around the local mountainsides is being called much farther afield. In the past year alone, his research has taken him to Montana, Utah, Oregon, Switzerland, Romania, Hawaii, Australia and New Zealand.

FAMILY GUY
Support from relatives helped this first-generation college graduate find his way
By TERESA KILLIAN TATE

When Errol Kilgore ’99 was a child growing up in Asheville, college graduates were like multimillionaires: He knew they existed, but had no personal relationships with any. “I noticed that the adults I knew who never left the city didn’t have a college education,” said Kilgore. “For all I knew, Asheville was the best place on earth, but I wanted to have options, and going to college was something I knew I wanted to do to give me greater opportunities.”

The first time he came to Western Carolina University was orientation before his freshman year, and the campus seemed daunting. It was his mother, Sylvia Kilgore, a preschoo teacher who had not gone to college herself, who calmed him by simply telling him how proud she was. Four years later, the sight of her had the same effect. Said about leaving his friends at WCU and wondering what the future held, Kilgore saw his mother, grandmother and sisters coming into Ramsey Regional Activity Center just as the lights dimmed before commencement. “Those are very special memories for me,” he said.

Between them was hard work. In the classroom, he studied toward a bachelor’s degree in industrial distribution with a concentration in marketing. He volunteered as a peer counselor for other African-American students and as a leader with WCU’s chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity. The nation’s first African-American Greek letter organization.

In addition, Kilgore worked 25 to 30 hours a week at Taco Bell or jobs on campus. During the summers, he also took on temporary jobs at factories or, once, digging ditches.

Landing his first job after college was work, too, including arriving early enough to be at the front of a 200-person line at a job fair. He was elated when the temporary job he interviewed for with Johnson & Johnson was instead offered a permanent, full-time job in pharmaceutical sales. "A week after I walked across the stage at graduation, they called to offer me the position. My mom and grandmother were there, and we were all very excited. I was the first generation in my family to graduate from college, and I was going to work for a Fortune 500 company." He quickly racked up accolades and national awards, including “Rookie of the Year” and “Sales Excellence,” and promotions led him to the Chicago area. Now he is a bipharmaceutical representative in the Bone Health Division of Amgen and plans to learn Spanish so he can serve even more communities, perhaps abroad.

His success came as no surprise to his friends from WCU. Stacy Morris ’98 describes Kilgore as consistent and genuine, and Joseph Hyman ’01 as a goal-oriented and strong minded. “He doesn’t just work hard. He workssmart.” He’s always there when you need him,” said Hyman. “He loves God and family, and is inspired by them.” Although Kilgore’s mother, who died in 2001, could not be with him at WCU this fall when he was honored with WCU’s Young Alumni Award, his older sister, his grandmothers, an aunt and friends were by his side. “I am lucky to have such a large and supportive family,” said Kilgore. “They played a major role in helping me to develop into the man I am today.”
During his long tenure as an educator, the venues for Jack M. Campbell ’58 have included the classrooms of the Knoxville, Tenn., school system, but also the fir- and spruce-crested ridges of the high northeastern end of Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Campbell’s job in the traditional classroom ended with his retirement in 1987, but his teaching work continues as he builds upon a 42-year career as a seasonal ranger in the Smokies.

Raised in Maggie Valley, Campbell graduated from high school in 1953 and enrolled at WCU. He completed academic requirements to get his bachelor’s degree in industrial arts education in December 1957 and began his teaching career in Knoxville the following month, coming back to Cullowhee later that spring to pick up his diploma.

Over the years, Campbell became known as a strict disciplinarian as he taught industrial arts to legions of Knoxville’s young people. He also built a reputation as a top-notch teacher, including being named “Most Outstanding Secondary School Teacher” in Knoxville City Schools in 1984 and one of the top 10 industrial arts teachers in Tennessee in 1975. After 10 years of teaching in Knoxville, Campbell began his second career as a seasonal law enforcement ranger stationed in the Cosby area on the Tennessee side of the park. “My wife, Sue, and I would move our family from Knoxville to the Smokies and live in park housing for the summer months,” Campbell said. “During the first 10 years, the whole family would move for the season until our three sons developed other interests.”

Campbell’s work at Cosby continued mostly uninterrupted for 28 years, but since 1997 he has been working on the North Carolina side of the park as manager of Balsam Mountain Campground, the highest National Park Service campground in the East. Located on a Smokies ridgeline that separates the Cataloochee Valley to the east from the Big Cove section to the west, he lives in a combination office/home at the campground entrance from May through October. His wife, who has a business in Knoxville, joins him from time to time. “There is no electricity in this remote corner of the Smokies that is connected to civilization by 10 miles of paved road, so a propane-powered pump provides water from a nearby well to the house and campground. Propane also heats the water and runs the refrigerator and cookstove. The fireplace provides warmth during the chilly summer nights at 5,320 feet elevation, and oil lamps and a couple solar-powered lights illuminate the house. Cell phone service is available “occasionally.”

Campbell says he doesn’t mind the lack of modern amenities. “We didn’t have electricity when I was a boy until I was 10 or 11 years old,” he said. “I like not having TV up here. I have to go through a transition when I leave and go back to where there are modern conveniences.”

Just as he did back in the Knoxville classrooms, Campbell runs a tight ship as he educates campground visitors about park regulations meant to promote their health and enjoyment while also protecting the park’s resources. But the regulations are administered with a twinkle in the eye as Campbell alerts campers about the bears and boars — and the occasional elk that wander up from Cataloochee Valley.

Joe Pond, supervisory park ranger in the Smokies and Campbell’s boss, says Campbell has a long-standing reputation as a ranger “who goes the extra mile for every park visitor he encounters.” Campbell doesn’t limit himself to duties within the campground, either, Pond said, as he also can be found ranging around the area, clearing trees from roads, assisting stranded motorists, monitoring the elk herd, and generally keeping a close watch. “Jack Campbell represents to me a clear example of what public service is truly about,” Pond said.

With his 42 years of seasonal work completed, Campbell has served under 10 of the 15 superintendents who have led Great Smoky Mountains National Park in its 75 years of existence. During the park’s 50th anniversary celebration in 1984, Campbell served on the security team for Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander. Campbell was back on duty this past September for the 75th anniversary bash held at Newfound Gap.

Campbell said he has enjoyed every aspect of his work in the Smokies, and he plans to return to Balsam Mountain Campground in May. Looking back over the years, “I can’t imagine having two careers that I could have enjoyed more,” he said.
1963
Mel Gibson MAE ’67 and Joanne Gibson MAE ’67 participated in the 2009 N.C. Senior Games state finals this fall in Raleigh. Both participated in the 65-69 age group. Mel won gold in the standing long jump and the standing long jump, and silver in basketball shooting. Joanne won silver in the standing long jump.

1964
Louise McTaggart MAEd, broker and owner of Louise McTaggart & Associates, a real estate agency in Blainville, Ga., has been named 2009-10 chairman of the resources committee of the community council of the Georgia Mountain Research and Education Center. McTaggart will serve as liaison between the volunteer annual campaign organization and the council.

1961
Linda Collins was the lucky winner in a sweepstakes to throw the first pitch in a June game between the Alberta Braves and the New York Yankees at Turner Field. In front of a 50,000-strong crowd, Collins threw to Braves pitcher Tommy Hanson. "I felt really good about my throw," Collins said. "It went straight to him. Of course, I was not on the pitcher's mound, but about halfway there." An image of Hanson signing the ball flashed to the big screen, and Collins spent the remainder of the game watching with three friends from Turner Field's posh 755 Club.

1962
W. Wat Hopkins MA ’73, a professor of journalism and Communication at Virginia Tech, was named the Roy H. Pan Distinguished Visiting Professor in the School of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of North Carolina for the 2010 spring semester. Hopkins is teaching a course in communication law, working with graduate students and presenting his research during a colloquium series.

1972
Melody Jenkins has been a librarian for 34 years at the Muscogee–Colquitt County Library in Georgia.

1973
Michael A. Kollar MAEd ’74 has been re-elected as chair of the South Carolina Board of Examiners in Psychology. Kollar is a former recipient of the Outstanding Lifetime Contribution to Psychology Award from the South Carolina Psychological Association.

1974
Terry Bell MAE ’83 retired as director of auxiliary services in June after more than three decades with Macon County Schools. Bell has worked at various schools in the system, including as assistant principal at Franklin High School, his alma mater.

1975
Wanda Pate Jonas was appointed regional attorney in the National Labor Relations Board’s Denver office. She assists in the enforcement and administration of the National Labor Relations Act in Colorado, Wyoming and Utah and parts of Nebraska, Idaho and Montana. The NLRB investigates labor practices and conducts elections to determine whether employees desire union representation. With the NLRB since the beginning of her legal career in 1979, Jonas has worked in Hawaii, Las Vegas and Atlanta.

1976
Jay Edwards has launched Green Collar K-9 Development with three partners to train dogs for customers in the military- law enforcement, security and search/ rescue fields. Edwards served as a sergeant in the tactical division after 28 years with the Greensboro Police Department. He and his partners, who share law enforcement and dog training experience, raise the puppies from 8 weeks old. “These dogs will go anywhere and do anything,” Edwards said.

1977
Terry M. Fertner is vice president of industry relations and market development for LKQ Corp., the largest nationwide provider of aftermarket, recycled and refinished collision replacement products. Fertner is responsible for the development, implementation and coordination of LKQ’s product offerings and services to the auto insurance and collision repair industries. He is married to the former Vickie Richards ’79.

Mitch Lowrey established Mitch Lowrey Construction in Winston-Salem in 2000 and is a certified Energy Star builder. He was named Builder of the Year in 2008 by the Home Builders Association of Winston-Salem. He is married to Gloria Jennings Lowrey.

SHIRT TALE
Bernice Cowan Higdon ’41 has donated a shirt featuring the autographs of a veritable “who’s who” of Western Carolina to the mountain heritage Center. Higdon, a Jackson County native who now lives in Yuba City, Calif., performed embroidery over the signatures of professors and friends, including student body president Charles McCall ’41 and Robert Lee Madison, a founder of the institution that would become WCU. Early life ’40 drew the Catamount on the shirt back. It is on temporary display at the Mountain Heritage Center.
Sue Lynn Ledford MPA ’06 is community health director for Wake County.

1998
A series of acrylic paintings by Paul Nehring MA is featured in the February 2010 issue of Artforum magazine (shown here is “Microsax”). Nehring teaches art at Western Michigan University.

1999
Jeff Lewis has joined the advisory board of WCU’s College of Business. He is vice-president of product development for Nielsen Communications Inc. of Asheville.

Kevin Redding is executive director of the Piedmont Land Conservancy.

2001
Bradley Wayne Northcutting MBA married Nolly Virginia Davis in July in Spartanburg, S.C. Norcutt is manager of Internet technology finance for Bi-lo corporate offices in Mauldin, S.C.

2003
Mitch Hall became defensive line coach at Newberry College, in Newberry, S.C., for the 2009 season. Hall came to Newberry after serving as the defensive coordinator at North Greenville University and coaching running backs and tight ends at Presbyterian College. He was a graduate assistant at WCU in 2003-04 and played for special teams at the university from 1998-02.

Stephanie Hunter MBA married Kevin Lee Cooke in the summer. The Cookes live in Fletcher.

2006
Gary Takacs is media manager with the Lyncoburg, S.C., nature center and a freelance arts and entertainment writer. Takacs is in the process of application to the Navy for a position as a commissioned officer. He has been accepted into the pilot program. He is originally from the Roanoke, Va., area.

Blanche Johnston won two recent sculpture competitions. A panel of artists and sculptors chose two steel pieces, titled “Bee #43” and “Bee #4,” as winners in a contest sponsored by the Jackson County Green Energy Park. “Bee #4,” which resembles a giant abstract spider, is installed at the park. Johnston also won first place in the Caldwell Art Council’s 2009 Sculpture Competition for a wooden piece titled “5 Times,” a 15-foot chocolate sculpture, and second place in the Operation Red F Studios competition in Waynesville, and his wife, Melody Johnston, won first place.

2007
Bradley Wayne Northcutting MBA married Nolly Virginia Davis in July in Spartanburg, S.C. Norcutt was manager of Internet technology finance for Bi-lo corporate offices in Mauldin, S.C.

2008
Johnathan Lee Fayssoux married Andrea Marie Vizina. Fayssoux was a member of Delta Sigma Pi and is employed by Mehmert Corp. in Charlotte. He and his bride reside in Gastonia.

Tad Kealey of the Livingston Police Department was promoted to major, second-in-command to the chief of police. Kealey has trained at the FBI Academy and taught basic law enforcement training at Davidson Community College. Kealey’s father, Robert H., also served the Livingston Police Department, retiring as a major.

Joel Queen MBA ’09 is program director and instructor at the Oceanares Institute for Cultural Arts in Asheville. Queen, a master poster, has pieces in the collections of Smithsonian and the British Museum. The institute opened in 2009 and is a joint endeavor of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, Southwestern Community College and WCU.

2009
N. Hill III ’63, biology; Dr. Julius Grebenyuk hoping to eventually expand the number of languages and natural resources; and Bob Tiger ’73, anthropology and sociology. Annanino warned in law enforcement for 30 years, including 10 as chief of the Asheville Police Department, where he encouraged his employees to further their educations and built a partnership between the city and WCU’s master’s degree program in law enforcement.

Fayssoux, of Sylva, has published seven novels for young adults and is widely recognized as among the top authors of her genre. She honored WCU with her contribution of 21 years worth of manuscripts to Hunter Library’s Special Collections.

A veteran of the computer industry, Craddock, of San Francisco, has spent the last 14 years with Microsoft Corp., where he manages the group responsible for Windows Live Hotmail and calendar services. Hill, of Clacksville, Ga., is a Navy veteran and anthrologist with deep ties to WCU. Hill’s grandfather, a country doctor, was a trustee when WCU was a teacher’s college, and his uncle, also a doctor, was the first WCU graduate to attend medical school.

Lettieri is a plastic surgery specialist in trauma reconstruction at the Mayo Clinic in Arizona. His patients include burn and cancer victims and those who have suffered animal attacks and other accidents. As a volunteer, and former WCU student recipient, Page is a leading figure in N.C. public education, having served in numerous administrative capacities in Buncombe County and, since 2004, as superintendent of Henderson County Public Schools.

Ryan is assistant chair of the department of geology at the University of North Carolina at Asheville. Members of the family of the late W. Ernest Bird ’75, acting president of Western Carolina University from 1956 to 1958 and president from 1964 to 2005, recently visited the Bird Alumni House as part of an orientation session attended by freshwoman Sarah Vaughan (center), Bird’s granddaughter, and her friend, who is related by Bird and his wife, Myrtle Wells Bird ’52, as their graduate residence in 1949, the house was acquired by the university in 1959 and offered to the WCU Alumni Association in 1990.

MOST DISTINGUISHED

College of Arts and Sciences honors eight of its graduates

As part of October’s Homecoming activities, the College of Arts and Sciences at Western Carolina University recognized the achievements of the following graduates from its departments: Will Annanino MPA ’89, political science; and public affairs, Sue Ellen Bridges ’76, English; Richard Craddock ’94, mathematics and computer science; Dr. Julius N. Hill III ’63, biology; Dr. Salvatore Lettieri ’83, chemistry and physics; Stephen Page ’57 MA ’73, history; Jeffrey Ryan ’83, government and politics; and Sarah Lowell MAEd ’89, human biology.

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Benjamin L. Pendry is vice president of advancement for the North-American Interfraternity Conference, an international trade organization. At WCU, Pendry joined Sigma Chi Fraternity, serving in numerous roles, including chapter president.

Emily Anne Seay married Michael Chad Inman in April in Swannanoa and is a fifth-grade teacher at Ethowen Elementary School in Henderson County.

Dennis Wilson is now head coach of the Asheville Copperheads, a Coastal Plain League baseball team. Wilson played outfield for the Gatelords and helped lead the team to the South Carolina Conference regular season title and a berth in the NCAA tournament.

2008
Tad Daggett MA won an Annenberg Graduate Fellowship to continue his studies in the writing program at the University of Southern California Film School.

Jemaine Nicole Efird and Jason Lee Beaver were married in June in Shelby. Efird is the director of Walker Woodworking in Shelby. Beaver is an employee of Servo South.

In addition to flight attendent Sheila Dalal ’73 (profiled in the fall 2009 issue of the magazine), another WCU alumni was onboard U.S. Airways Flight 1549 in January 2009, when Capt. Chesley Sullenberger made an emergency landing on the Hudson River. Brad Williams ’07 sat seat 1F, and said the 155 survivors – everyone onboard – are alive today thanks to “the care of that flight and the grace of God.” That two WCU alumni were on the planes “proves that while the world is small, the WCU alumni base is extensive,” Williams said.

Lakshmi Lakshminarasimhan MBA, Shankar Balasubramanian MBA and Janani Ramawamy MBA ’07 work for the small business consulting firm Angarian International Inc. in Maryland. The magazine Inc., on a list that ranks fast-growing small businesses, rated Angarian 330 out of 5,000 in the United States.

2009
Wells Gordon MM, a string and electric bass musician, has accepted a music faculty position at Elizabeth City State University. Gordon teaches classes in music technology and recording arts.

A film made by Asheville resident Aaron Putnam for his senior thesis in WCU’s motion picture and television production program was selected to screen at an annual international film festival in Spain last October. Located on the Costa Brava south of Barcelona, Sitges International Film Festival of Catalonia is considered the most important festival for fantasy, science fiction and horror films. Putnam’s film, “Stripes,” is about a town attacked nightly by a force created, and three people who must decide whether to let a purported friend who is trapped outside into their house.

ALUMNI DEATHS
Lewis Michael Combs ’79, Aug. 29, Rutherfordton.
Francee Lovelace Barnwell ’68, Nov. 2, Marion.
Gerald M. Bastarache ’62, July 10, Washington, D.C.
Mary Clyde Beck ’41, Sept. 19, Hayesville.
David C. Bossard MPA ’90, June 24, Farmington, W.Va.
G. Forrest Craig ’78, Jan. 10, Yorktown.
Pauline Nolen Clifton Brown ’29, Aug. 11, Tullahoma, Fla.
Richard Garrett Calloway ’74, Sept. 25, Mount Airy.
Earl F. Cathe Sr. MA ’70, Nov. 24, Laurinburg, S.C.
Lori Anne Clark ’92, June 30, Clio, Mich.
Ray Francis Crowder ’91, Nov. 4, Canard.
Amiee Duke-Whitespaper Dean ’49, July 12, Frederick, Md.
Thomson Thomas ’49 MAE ’53, Aug. 24, Brevard.
Louise Hتعted Edwards ’36 ’51, Aug. 27, Whitmire.
Lee H. Fisher ’65, Sept. 20, Canard.
Janeville Blackstone Flynn ’66, Aug. 11, Lake Lure.
Robert Carlos Jr. ’02, Oct. 29, Sylvia.
Arthur Eugene Hansen ’68, Aug. 15, Concord.
Samatha Leigh Ormand maed ’82, July 8, Columbus.
Offlice Leo Howell ’58, Oct. 4, Charlotte.
Edward Coleman Jones Sr. ’49, Sept. 8, Sevierville.
Harry Lee Kent ’70, Oct. 26, Iva, S.C.

Anne Scott King ’82 MS ’85, July 14, Hickory.
Judy Anders Love ’71, Aug. 17, Black Mountain.
Robert P. Mahood MA ’75, July 8, Charlotte.
G. Burl Many ’41, Oct. 18, Burnsville.
Michael Alan Martin ’77, June 30, Winston.
William Gerald Medford ’66, Sept. 27, Durham.
Carroll R. Merrell ’48, Sept. 25, Charlotte.
Joseph Oliver Metcalf ’77, July 21, Asheville.
Linley Roland Miller Jr. ’72, July 2, Charlotte.
Danielle West Morgan ’04, Sept. 19, Conover.
Glennie W. Murray EDES ’73, Sept. 20, Hanahan, S.C.
Dr. Jeffrey L. Nain ’70, Sept. 30, Miburnwall, Pa.
Elizabeth Wright Ordmand MAE ’82, Sept. 6, Columbus.
James Harold Phillips ’72 MAE ’73, Jan. 10, Waynesville.
Ron R. Poulit ’58, Aug. 5, Valdese.
Frederick Marion Powers ’61, June 10, Rutherfordton.
Claude Edward Robinson ’72, Nov. 8, Rutherfordton.
Carlyle Sllhoff Roberts ’76 MBA ’83, Nov. 8, Asheville.
William R. Rocker Jr. MAE ’73, Aug. 18, Black Mountain.
Harley Anthony Sanders ’03, Oct. 24, Waynesville.
Tommy Dennis Suggs ’71, Aug. 25, Signal Mountain, Tenn.
Edgar Graham Simpson Jr. ’70, Aug. 8, Glen Anpin.
Wayne Paul Smith ’72, July 30, Waynesville.
In the last 11 months of his life, Wes Bonds put 41,000 miles on his car traveling nationwide to share the low-cost methods he developed for teaching complex biotechnology concepts—including DNA sequencing—to undergraduate and high school students. That was how Bonds, who died Sept. 14, spent his retirement from the chemistry faculty at WCU. “He saw the teacher effect of globalization, and he was passionate about funding a way for science to become the next generation of American students,” said his son Trip Bonds.

To carry on their father’s mission, sons Trip and Charles established the Wesley D. Bonds Jr. Science Education Scholarship to support the work done by their father. The scholarship will fund the development of great science teachers because of its solid foundation in science and teaching programs.

Before Wes Bonds became a teacher, the Alabama native wanted to get kids excited about science. While a research chemist for Dow Chemical Co., he volunteered his fifth-grade teacher to a job teaching at a Vatican School of Medicine laboratory focused on the genome project. While there, he volunteered his time to help educate kids about the science behind DNA sequencing.

Later, Wes Bonds began reading about the human genome project. He returned to school to become a teacher and in 2001 came to WCU where he taught chemistry and guided students in genetic research of the red oak. “I was Wes Bonds’ graduate student, and I don’t believe I would have achieved the same level of success had it not been for him,” said Eva Patterson Webb, retired food services employee, Oct. 6; Cullowhee.

Bonds had his greatest passion was teaching younger students, and Trip Bonds. “WCU is uniquely positioned to develop great science teachers because of its solid foundation in science and teaching programs.”

To carry on their father’s mission, sons Trip and Charles established the Wesley D. Bonds Jr. Science Education Scholarship to be awarded to those who share his vision and values, and who are willing to invest in WCU’s capability to develop world-class teachers.”

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FEBRUARY 2010

THURSDAY-FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 25-26
Track and field — Southern Conference indoor championship. Deeroms, S.C. 828.227.7338

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 27
“Wesley” — Premiere of film about John Wesley, founder of the Methodist movement. Proceeds benefit motion picture and television program. 7 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center 828.227.2479

MARCH 2010

THURSDAY-MONDAY, MARCH 8-4
Women’s and men’s basketball — Southern Conference championship. Charlotte. 828.227.7338

FRIDAY, MARCH 12
Board of Trustees — Quarterly meeting 9:30 a.m. Boardroom of the H.F. Robinson Administration Building. 828.227.3039

MARCH 2010

THURSDAY, MARCH 25
“A Chorus Line” — Classic story of an audition for a Broadway musical. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. 828.227.7338

APRIL 2010

TUESDAY, APRIL 6
Don Reitz — Premier contemporary comedian. 9 p.m. and 1 p.m. demonstrations. 4 p.m. slides and talk. Fire and Performing Arts Center. 828.227.3933

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 7
Recopision — Works from the Joselita Niggl poster collection and the annual art student juried exhibition 4 p.m. Fine Art Museum. Exhibits on display through Wednesday. May 5. 828.227.3931

TUESDAY, APRIL 19
Jazz Festival — Guest artists, School of Music faculty and student ensembles. 7:30 p.m. Fire and Performing Arts Center. 828.227.3933

APRIL 2010

FRIDAY, APRIL 16
Track and field — WCU Invitational. Catamount Sport Complex.

SUNDAY, APRIL 18
“The Hiding Place” — Ballet Magnificat! presents the true story of a Dutchman who helped Jews escape the Nazis during World War II. Galaxy of Stars Series. 3 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. 828.227.2479

APRIL 2010

SATURDAY, APRIL 24-25
Track and field — Southern Conference outdoor championship. Boons. 828.227.7338

FRIDAY, APRIL 30
Postcard Showcases — Featuring the dance of New York City. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. 828.227.3672

MAY 2010

SATURDAY, MAY 7-8
Commencement — Graduate students. 7 p.m. Friday, undergraduates from the colleges of Arts and Science, Education and Allied Professions, and Fire and Performing Arts, 10 a.m. Saturday, undergraduates from the colleges of Business, Health and Human Sciences, and the Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology, 3:30 p.m. Saturday, Ramsey Regional Activity Center. 828.227.7216

WEDNESDAY, MAY 26-30

MONDAY-TUESDAY, MARCH 22-23
Spring Library Festival — Authors including John Aiken, Dennis Covington, Susan Davis, Chitra Divakaruni, Stias House, Cleopatra Muth, Jill McKinzie, Nahnanch, Patricia Smith and Carol Weatherford. A.K. Hinds University Center Tutoring and Counselor Building main office.

Chancellor John Bardo and students cheer on the men’s basketball team during a win earlier this season in the Ramsey Regional Activity Center. Join other Catamount fans at the Southern Conference Tournament, set for March 4-8 in Charlotte. For ticket information, call 800-34-GOWCU or visit catamountsports.com.