The bonds built through the SMART program show.
The bonds show three afternoons a week when children at the Cherokee Youth Center rush over with hellos and hugs as Western Carolina University students arrive to mentor them one-on-one in reading and other academic skills.
They show when a mentor such as WCU sophomore Lydia Poetker from Taylorsville comforts a student. “When I told her I had to leave, she asked if she could have a picture of me,” Poetker said. “I didn’t have one, but it made me smile and inevitably brought me back the next semester.”

Now, Wayne Robbins, English instructor at Western and SMART program director, is rolling out new activities and rewards to strengthen a different kind of bond – the bond between the tribe’s young members and their own heritage. The recent announcement of the Cherokee Preservation Foundation’s decision to continue supporting the program with a more than $50,000 grant to WCU’s English department means Robbins will be able to advance those efforts into the 2006-07 school year.

Children’s books centered on traditional Cherokee legends such as “How Rabbit Lost His Tail” and “How Medicine Came to the People” are the rewards for participants in the SMART program, which stands for Successful Mentoring, Artistic expression, Reading for life and Telling our story. SMART staff members are helping produce a play with the center’s drama club based on the book “The Elder Tree.” The story, which Western students adapted into a script, features an old oak tree who explains to Cherokee children why they should respect all creatures “from the lowest worm to the highest dove.”

Robbins also invited an elder to teach Cherokee language at the center once a week this semester and has met with an English graduate student about a “telling our story” project. Youth center participants will illustrate and write stories about themselves in the Cherokee language, and the book – with English subtitles – will be presented to the community and the children’s parents.

“What I’ve learned about the Cherokee culture is about the constant struggle for preservation of cultural identity in the midst of a larger...”

Dorothy Allison, author of “Bastard Out of Carolina,” and Rick Bragg, Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, lead the field of acclaimed authors coming to Cullowhee to participate in Western Carolina University’s fourth annual Spring Literary Festival, set for March 27–30.
Allison will read from her works at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 29, and Bragg will participate in a panel discussion at noon Thursday, March 30, and a book reading at 7 p.m. March 30. All three events will be held in the A.K. Hinds University Center Theater.
Organized by Western’s department of English, the festival expands this year from three days to four and celebrates diversity with festival guests including slam poet Mayda Del Valle, humorous nonfiction author Ayun Halliday, Affrilachian Poets member Crystal Wilkinson and Appalachian novelist Silas House. The festival also hosts its first bilingual poetry reading with the work of Randall Watson and its first N.C. Poet Laureate’s Panel composed of Poet Laureate Kathryn Stripling Byer, Mark Smith-Soto and Jaki Shelton Green.
In addition, the festival includes a performance of “Much Ado About Nothing” by the Shenandoah Shakespeare Company at Western’s Fine and Performing Arts Center on Tuesday, March 28.
Allison’s first novel, “Bastard Out of Carolina,” was one of five finalists for the 1992 National Book Award and has been translated into French, German, Greek, Spanish, Norse, Chinese and Italian and developed into a movie. She also wrote the New York Times best-selling novel “Cavedweller”; “Two or Three Things I Know for Sure,” which was made into an award-winning documentary; “Skin: Talking About Sex, Class and Literature”; and “Trash,” a collection of short stories. The Boston Globe proclaimed her “one of the finest writers of her generation.” Allison, a native of Greenville, S.C., is currently a visiting writer at Columbia College in Chicago.
“Gender Across Cultures” Research Conference Is March 29

“Gender Across Cultures,” the fifth annual gender research conference at Western, will be held Wednesday, March 29, in A.K. Hinds University Center.

Part of Women’s History Month activities at WCU, the daylong conference is sponsored by the university’s Women’s Studies Program, Women’s Center and College of Arts and Sciences.

The conference will begin at 9 a.m. with a keynote address by Cassandra Chambless, a WCU alumna who works as a folklorist and ethnographer specializing in religious rituals and pilgrimage in Middle Eastern and North African traditions.

A resident of Egypt for three years, Chambless earned her bachelor’s degree in English and French at WCU in 1994. She received a master’s degree in African languages and literature at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, and is currently working on her doctoral degree in folklore at Indiana University.

During her presentation in the University Center Grandroom, Chambless will discuss women’s roles in traditional Egyptian religious life, and the impact of religion in the lives of Egyptian women.

Concurrent paper presentations will be given from 10 a.m. until 10:50 a.m., and again from 1 to 3:50 p.m. at various locations around the University Center.

Among the paper topics are “Life Fit: Coping for a Lifetime – An Intervention for Preadolescent Females,” “The Effects of Care-giving Expectations on Women Caring for a Family Member with Alzheimer’s Disease,” “The Body Project,” “Women and Religion: Cracking Dogmatic and Cultural Boundaries,” “Confronting Whiteness in American Women’s History,” “Socialization of Gender” and “Gender and Pay Differentials.”

A roundtable discussion, “Betty Friedan’s Feminist Mystique: Have Things Changed?,” will be held at 1 p.m. in the Cardinal Room.

Poster sessions will be held in the Grandroom from 11 a.m. until noon, followed by the conference luncheon at noon in Club Illusions featuring Warren Wilson College faculty member Siti Kusujiarti speaking on “Conceptualization and Implementation of Welfare Policies in Indonesia.” The cost for lunch is $10, and lunch participants are asked to R.S.V.P. by calling (828) 227-7268 or (828) 227-3839.

The complete conference schedule is available by clicking on the Web at: http://www.wcu.edu/womenstudies/genderacrosscultures.html. For more information, contact Marilyn Chamberlin, assistant professor in WCU’s department of anthropology and sociology, at (828) 227-3839.

LITERARY FESTIVAL continued from page 1

Bragg, a Pulitzer Prize–winning reporter formerly with The New York Times, hit the best-seller charts with his first book, “All Over but the Shoutin,” an account of breaking free from the poverty of his youth and finding success at the pinnacle of American journalism. His other works include “Somebody Told Me: The Newspaper Stories of Rick Bragg,” “Av’s Man,” “Hank Williams: Snapshots from the Lost Highway,” and “I Am a Soldier, Too: The Jessica Lynch Story.” Bragg is a writing professor at the University of Alabama.

“Students and people in the surrounding community have a wonderful chance to hear some of America’s greatest writers – live – all in one place,” said Mary Adams, associate professor of English and festival director. “These writers represent different regions, genres and traditions. I hope people come away with new ideas for their own reading and writing.

“Most importantly, I hope that they come away with a changed sense of what ‘literature’ means – not just written words by long-dead writers but something going on passionately in every medium and every setting: over the airwaves, in coffee houses, under bridges. It’s about anything and everything, including the stuff happening in our lives every day,” Adams said.

For more information, contact Western’s English department at (828) 227-7264, e-mail Mary Adams at madams@email.wcu.edu or check out the festival Web site at http://www.litfestival.org.

Smart Program continued from page 1

society that tends to want to absorb people into it,” Robbins said.

The Cherokee Preservation Foundation funded a planning grant in 2003 for the SMART program sought by Laurel Vartabedian, who was a Western faculty member. Robbins began working with SMART in fall 2004 and became the program director in early 2005. The program offers Western students something beyond the kind of mentoring opportunities that do not require a 40-minute commute to the Cherokee Youth Center.

“It’s very different from an after-school program in Jackson County because of that cultural uniqueness on the reservation,” Robbins said.

The director of the Cherokee Youth Center, Denise Ballard, said the center’s after-school participants look forward to visits from WCU students. “It makes such a difference,” Ballard said. “They help provide needed one-on-one attention to a large group of children.”

For more information, contact Wayne Robbins at (828) 227-7264 or wrobbins@wcu.edu.

— by Teresa Killian

NewsFile

George Frizzell of Hunter Library’s Special Collections and Peter Koch and Suzanne McDowell of the Mountain Heritage Center presented the program “The Enigma Revealed” to the annual North Carolina Museums Council Conference on March 2 in Winston–Salem. The program described the development and implementation of the Horace Kephart Web site that debuted in the spring of 2005. During the conference, the center and the publications division of the Office of Public Relations received the 2006 publications award for best educational guide of limited color, for the center’s educational program guide, which describes the variety of programs available to regional adult and youth groups.

The Radio Advertising Bureau recently announced that Don Connelly, director of WCU’s broadcasting program, has earned its highest level of certification as a certified radio marketing expert. Connelly is one of fewer than 50 certified radio marketing experts in the country and is the only university professor to be certified at the organization’s highest level.

The RAB is the sales and marketing arm of the radio industry, with more than 5,000 member stations, networks and radio sales organizations in the United States and abroad.

Bill Studenc, senior director of news services in the Office of Public Relations, has been re-elected to the board of directors of the College News Association of the Carolinas. CNAC is a group of higher education public relations officials from North and South Carolina. Founded in 1963, the organization includes members from public and private institutions from both states.
### Monday, March 27

**Spring Literary Festival** — panel of poets. 2 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-7264)

**Undergraduate Expo 2006** — Applied Sciences. Various campus locations. (227-2101)

**MFA artist talk series** — Heidi Leitzke and K Sullivan. 4:30 p.m. Room 223, FAPAC. (227-3597)

**Spring Literary Festival** — Appalachian writers Silas House and Crystal Wilkinson. 7 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-7264)

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**Tuesday, March 28—Saturday, April 1**

**Exhibit** — “Faces of Art,” thesis exhibition, BFA students. Fine Arts Museum, FAPAC. Opening reception March 29, 5–7 p.m. (227-3593)

**Spring Literary Festival** — novelists Dorothy Allison. 7 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-7264)

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**Tuesday, March 28**

**Undergraduate Expo 2006** — Business. Various campus locations. (227-2101)

**2006 Asian American Heritage Celebration** — Japanese painting workshop. 2–4 p.m. Room 150, FAPAC. (227-2276)

**Open meeting** — updates for campus community on major information technology initiatives and plans. 3:30–4:30 p.m. Multipurpose Room, UC. (227-7487)

**Spring Literary Festival** — poet Randall Watson. 7 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-7264)

**Catamount baseball** — vs. Georgia. 2 p.m. CSC. (227-7338)

**Catamount Concert Series**

- 3:30–4:30 p.m. MHC. (227-7129)
- 6:30 p.m. UC. (227-7234)
- 7:30 p.m. FAPAC. (227-2479)

**Tuesday, April 4**

**Meeting** — Faculty Senate Planning Team, Noon–2 p.m. Mary Will Mitchell Room, Brown Cafeteria. (227-3930)

**ArtiFacts!** — “Clocks and Sundials.” 2:30–3:30 p.m. MHC. (227-7129)

**Artist-in-Residence Orchestra** — “A Program of American Masters.” S. 4 p.m. FAPAC. (227-7242)

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**Wednesday, March 29**

**Undergraduate Expo 2006** — Education and Allied Professions. Various campus locations. (227-2101)

**Women’s History Month** — “Gender Across Cultures,” fifth annual Gender Research Conference. 9 a.m.–4 p.m. UC. (227-3839)

**Spring Literary Festival** — novelist Dorothy Allison. 7 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-7264)

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**Thursday, March 30**

**Undergraduate Expo 2006** — Arts and Sciences. Various campus locations. (227-2101)

**Spring Literary Festival** — panel discussion featuring Kathryn Stripling Byer, Rick Bragg, Ayun Halliday and Randall Watson. Noon–2 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-7264)

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**Spring Literary Festival** — Ayun Halliday. 2 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-7264)

**Films That Matter** — “Deliverance” (John Boorman, 1972), 6 p.m. Room 130, FAPAC. (227-2324)

**Mountain People Folklife Series** — “Stories of the Oconoluftee River Trail,” Jerry Wolfe and Freeman Owle. 6 p.m. MHC. (227-7129)

**Spring Literary Festival** — Rick Bragg. 7 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-7264)

**Friday, March 31**

**“Student Affairs and All That Jazz”** — gala evening to benefit Western students. S. 6:30 p.m. UC. (227-7234)

**Performance** — “The Piano Men,” the music of Billy Joel and Elton John, performed by Jim Witter. S. 7:30 p.m. FAPAC. (227-2479)

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**April, 2006**

**Sunday, April 2**

**ArtiFacts!** — “Streams of Life” tells the story of the past, present, and future of farming in Southern Appalachia, particularly Western North Carolina, through commodities such as corn, tobacco and livestock.

**Wednesdays, April 5**

**i7 Futures Forum** — “Molecular Bioscience Symposium.” 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-3439)

**Appalachian Cultural Luncheon Series** — Mark Powell, S.C. novelist. 12:15–1 p.m. FAPAC. (227-3597)

**Visiting documentary filmmaker** — Rachel Boynton, “Our Brand Is Crisis.” 7:30 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-3930)

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**Monday, April 3**

**MFA artist talk series** — K.L. Dunn. 4:30 p.m. Room 223, FAPAC. (227-3597)

**Visiting documentary filmmaker** — Rachel Boynton, “Our Brand Is Crisis.” 7:30 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-3930)

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**Tuesday, April 4**

**Meeting** — Faculty Senate Planning Team, Noon–2 p.m. Mary Will Mitchell Room, Brown Cafeteria. (227-3930)

**Wednesday, April 5**

**7 Futures Forum** — “Molecular Bioscience Symposium.” 8 a.m.–4:30 p.m. Theater, UC. (227-3439)

**Appalachian Cultural Luncheon Series** — Mark Powell, S.C. novelist. 12:15–1 p.m. MHC. (227-7129)

**Thursday, April 6**

**Competition** — 36th annual High School Mathematics Contest. 9 a.m.–2 p.m. RRAC. (227-7245)

**Films That Matter** — “The Deer Hunter” (Michael Cimino, 1978), 6 p.m. Room 130, FAPAC. (227-2324)

**Old Time and Bluegrass Music Jam** — 7–9 p.m. MHC. (227-7129)

**April, 2006**

**Exhibits**

- Fine Art Museum, FAPAC
- Mountain Heritage Center
- Slideshow Spotlight, MHC

**MARCH**

- “Streams of Life” tells the story of the revival of Hazel Creek, an Appalachian water-shed, from prehistory to Tennessee Valley Authority, focusing on both human and natural history.
- APRIL: “Working the Land” describes the past, present, and future of farming in Southern Appalachia, particularly Western North Carolina, through commodities such as corn, tobacco and livestock.

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**Key:** $—Admission fee; BB—Belk Building; CAC—Catamount Athletic Center; CAT—Center for Applied Technology; CSC—Catamount Softball Complex; FAPAC—Fine and Performing Arts Center; HA—Hoey Auditorium; HFR—H.F. Robinson Administration Building; HSCF—Hennon Stadium/Children Field; MHC—Mountain Heritage Center; NSA—Natural Sciences Auditorium; RH—Recital Hall, Coulter Building; RRAC—Ramsey Regional Activity Center; UC—A.K. Hinds University Center; UOC—University Outreach Center; WS/BW—Whitmore Stadium/Bob Waters Field.

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**Submissions:** Send news items and calendar notices to WCU Calendar, 1601 Ramsey Center, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 28723 or e-mail to: Reporter@email.wcu.edu. Submit items for the university’s online calendar at least one week prior to the event.

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The lawn of A.K. Hinds University Center will be lit up by luminarias for a good cause on Friday, April 7, at the annual campus Relay For Life for the American Cancer Society.

The luminarias, which are candles in white paper bags and sand, will line the University Center lawn in honor of those who have battled cancer. Members of the campus community will have an opportunity to pay tribute to loved ones and contribute to cancer research by purchasing a luminaria.

The suggested minimum donation to the Relay For Life is $5. All proceeds will benefit the American Cancer Society’s continuing programs of research, education, advocacy and service.

The American Cancer Society Relay For Life was founded in 1985 by Dr. Gordy Klatt in Tacoma, Wash. Klatt spent 24 hours circling a track at the University of Puget Sound as spectators paid to walk with him, raising $27,000. Weeks later, Klatt organized a committee and together they created the first Relay For Life event in the City of Destiny Classic 24-hour Run Against Cancer.

For more information, contact Bonnie Beam of the University Center’s student involvement office at (828) 227-7450 or Lisa Majors-Duff of the American Cancer Society at (828) 994-0431.

WCU’s Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet To Perform in WNC Prior To UK Tour

Do you want to hear the tunes the Smoky Mountain Brass Quintet will be playing this spring as it tours the United Kingdom, but you don’t really want to cash in those frequent flier miles?

Never fear. The ensemble, the resident faculty brass quintet at WCU, is planning a series of performances across Western North Carolina this spring prior to its overseas trip to England, Wales and Ireland.

The UK excursion May 8-16 is the second annual international tour for the SMBQ, which participated last year in the International Romantic Trumpet Festival in Russia.

Stops on the upcoming trip include concerts at the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology in Galway, Ireland; the Royal Welch College of Music and Drama in Cardiff, Wales; and the University of Wales-Swansea.

“We are very excited about this tour because it will help build Western’s already active relationships with institutions in Galway and Swansea,” said P. Bradley Ulrich, professor of trumpet at WCU. “Since this year has been named ‘the year to promote study abroad,’ we feel the timing of this tour could not be better.”

Quintet members, in addition to Ulrich, are David Ginn, trumpet; Alan F. Mattingly, horn; Daniel Cherry, trombone; and Michael Schallock, tuba. The group has been in existence since 1993 and performs a wide range of music from early music and classical to ragtime, jazz and contemporary compositions.

The recital performances across WNC and in the UK will feature music from the Southern Appalachian region of the United States, including selections by several past and present WCU composers. The ensemble will perform “Four Hymn Tune Settings” by Paul Basler, a WCU faculty member from 1989 until 1992, and a new three-movement composition based on Cherokee Indian music by Robert Kehrberg, interim dean of WCU’s College of Arts and Sciences.

“We are especially proud and excited to be performing Dr. Kehrberg’s latest piece, which was commissioned by the SMBQ especially for this occasion,” said Ulrich. “This multi-movement piece reflects on the recorded music of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee and creates new music based on the rhythmic and melodic material found in these recordings.”

The performances also will include “Persistent Echoes” by Mark Connor, theory and composition instructor at WCU. The one-movement piece is based on the melody “Sweet Prospect” from the Southern Harmony shape-note hymnbook published in the mid-1800s in the Southern Appalachian region.

SMBQ concerts in WNC this spring and summer include a Tuesday, April 4, performance as part of the Catamount Concert Series, in the recital hall of the Coulter Building beginning at 8 p.m. Admission is free.

For more information about the SMBQ, call Ulrich at (828) 227-3274 or visit the Web site www.smbq.com.

—by Bill Studenc