

Fall
2009

Western CAROLINA

THE PLANE TRUTH

A WCU ALUMNA SHARES HER
FIRST-HAND ACCOUNT OF
'THE MIRACLE ON THE HUDSON'

Fall 2009
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The title character from Western Carolina University's recent production of "Fiddler on the Roof" strikes a dramatic pose in a scene from the beloved musical. For information about upcoming cultural arts activities, visit events.wcu.edu.

WesternCAROLINA

ON THE COVER

WCU alumna **Sheila Dail '73** has the inside scoop on "the Miracle on the Hudson"



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Photo by Daniel J. Kellner



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You say you didn't receive a spring edition of the Magazine of Western Carolina University? That's because the state's budget crisis prevented us from being able to print one. So we moved the magazine online, but we couldn't let everyone know about the change if we didn't have their current e-mail address. To help us keep you informed about what's happening at WCU, please direct e-mail addresses to magazineaddress@wcu.edu.



FULL HOUSE

A spike in applications for fall semester and the opening of new dining and residence halls make WCU 'the place to be'

By TERESA KILLIAN

More than 12,000 people applied for enrollment in the 2009-10 freshman class at Western Carolina – so many that during the spring the approximately 9,000-student university started a waiting list for the first time in its history. “When I spoke to freshmen at orientation, I said, ‘You have good timing,’” said **Keith Corzine '82**, director of residential living. “Tremendous efforts by many to make WCU the place to be are truly coming to life this fall. A new dining hall has opened in the heart of campus next to a brand new residence hall and across from a recreation facility that is not even a year old. Meanwhile, we have renovated classrooms and laboratories, and construction is under way on another residence hall and a state-of-the-art health sciences building.” Together, the initiatives enhance the quality of the student experience inside and outside the classroom and create a vibrant quad, said Corzine.

Students agree. “It’s becoming the heart of campus,” said Amanda Bienhaus, an Honors College junior from Evansville, Ind., who is excited about living in the new Balsam Hall. “I see a lot of people playing Frisbee and catch on the lawn, and I see a lot of people working out in the new recreation center or hanging out with friends outside of the dining hall.” Freshmen such as Chelsea Finley of Asheville say the Alumni Tower and new dining hall are where they meet up with friends.

The \$17.6 million, 53,000-square-foot Courtyard Dining Hall offers indoor and outdoor seating, arched doorways, tall ceilings and natural light filtering in from about 130 windows. First to open inside was a convenience store, Starbucks Coffee Company and an upstairs all-you-care-to-eat venue. Food is cooked right in front of diners at themed stations, including a deli; a “home zone” with rotisserie items and traditional meats, potatoes and vegetables; an international grill; a pasta and pizza center with a fiery, old-world adobe-style oven; a dessert station with fresh-baked

goods; and salad bar and beverage centers. “It feels more like a restaurant,” said Andrew Rogers, a junior from Alpharetta, Ga. Closer to the start of the fall semester, the dining hall also will open a McAlister’s Deli and a food court featuring Zoca, a Mexican-themed restaurant; Grille Works; Panda Express; and Freshens.

Next door, students will move into the new four-story, 426-bed Balsam Hall – the first of a \$50.2 million pair of residence halls to replace Helder and Leatherwood. Most of the residents in Balsam’s mix of single and double rooms with private baths and common living areas and kitchens will be from WCU’s residential Honors College. Architects incorporated features such as columns and balconies that Honors students came to associate with the college in its old home of Reynolds Hall. Also, after a design charette involving students **Jennie V. Dowdle '08**, Michael O’Shea and **Maleah Pusz '09**, architects added innovations such as basement garage band space and a central arch complete with a study room that will bridge the fourth floor of Balsam Hall with the companion residence hall scheduled to open in fall 2010. Brian Railsback, dean of the Honors College, said the students were inspired by the arches they saw in France and Spain – and specifically in Barcelona’s Barri Gotic or “Gothic Quarter” – while traveling as part of an Honors class on the post-modern literary American expatriates.

For Shannon Owen, a junior from Shelby and president of the Honors College Board, relocating the Honors College to the center of campus is a big deal. “Some were worried about losing the community we built on the hill by leaving Reynolds, but I hope that translates to Balsam and that the location will make it easier for even more students to get involved in Honors College activities that will be hosted there,” said Owen.

Work also begins this fall on the newest part of campus – 344 acres acquired across N.C. Highway 107 as part of the

Millennial Initiative. A comprehensive regional economic development strategy, the initiative involves developing neighborhoods anchored by an academic building and surrounded by related private industry and government partners. Construction has started on a \$46 million, 160,000-square-foot health sciences building. The four-story facility will bring under one roof 11 programs from the College of Health and Human Sciences ranging from physical therapy to nursing. Inside will be classrooms, program and research laboratories, specialized clinics, offices, gathering places and a coffeehouse restaurant. Drew Craig, a junior environmental health major from Charlotte, said he is particularly excited about the building’s energy-efficiency features that will be constructed in line with guidelines for national certification in green design. “We have a responsibility to protect our environment, and this building is designed to help WCU do that,” said Craig.

On top of the many exciting openings, projects and events this fall, the Department of Residential Living is preparing for a full house, said Corzine. Although actual enrollment will not be known until after classes start, the freshman class could be one of the biggest in recent years. The record was 1,578 students in 2004. This year, 1,532 freshmen attended full orientation sessions, and an additional session was scheduled for August.

As a result, staff members have been boosting living-learning programs for first-year students such as Western

FALL 2009 BY THE NUMBERS

1 Waiting list to enroll new students

426 Beds in new Balsam Hall

8,000 Pounds the old-world adobe pizza oven weighs in new Courtyard Dining Hall

12,324 Applications received for 2009-10 freshman class before the cutoff

33,085 Inquiries for the 2010-11 freshman class... so far

Carolina PEAKS. In the program, students join a community centered on a topic such as cultivating leadership skills and helping the environment, and then participate in activities throughout the year to help them bond and discover their paths. Meeting them at the beginning of their journey is one of the most exciting days of the year for resident directors, including Brian Boyer, who works in Scott Hall. “I always joke that move-in day is like Christmas morning for me,” said Boyer. “It probably sounds pretty cliché, but by far, my favorite part of being a resident director is the students. I have met some incredible students and watched them grow into tremendous adults.”

Student orientation leader Drew Bishop gives two thumbs-up to the new developments on campus.

The new Courtyard Dining Hall rises behind a mound of debris from the recently demolished Dodson Cafeteria.



News From THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE



HISTORY IN THE MAKING

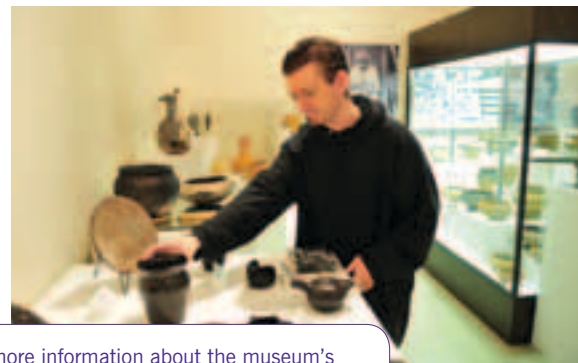
The Mountain Heritage Center commemorates 30 years

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

WCU's Mountain Heritage Center is shining its light brighter than ever on the Southern Appalachians, and it's not just the new lighting system that was recently installed in the museum's three exhibition galleries. As the center marks 30 years of interpreting the history and culture of the region, its staff has been busy expanding the scope and impact of its outreach programs across Western North Carolina and beyond.

"The Mountain Heritage Center experienced significant growth and change during the 2008-09 academic year," said **Scott Philyaw '83**, museum director and associate professor in WCU's department of history. "We have begun a much-needed upgrade to our physical space – both to bring it into compliance with professional standards and to make it more useful to the university community." Specific improvements include replacing the lighting in all three galleries, adding handrails to make the auditorium more accessible, and installing a wireless network in the galleries, the auditorium, and in the center's conference room. "Also, our outreach efforts increased in quantity and quality, with partners ranging from local historical societies to nationally recognized scholars and institutions, and we have significantly increased our work with students," Philyaw said. That includes serving as a co-sponsor for the Front Porch Music Club, an organization of students that gathers regularly in the museum lobby to play traditional music.

The Mountain Heritage Center hosts live music events, craft demonstrations and historical exhibits.



For more information about the museum's programs and special events, call (828) 227-7129 or visit www.wcu.edu/mhc.

KEEPING UP WITH THE JONES

The new curator dives into the local culture, with a side trip to Australia

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

Trevor Jones says the best aspect of being a museum curator is that the job is always providing opportunities to learn more history. For example, the new curator at WCU's Mountain Heritage Center most recently has been digging around for all the information he can find about Haywood County's Plott hounds in preparation for an upcoming exhibit about the famous hunting dogs.

A native of rural Minnesota, Jones has been immersing himself in all things having to do with Southern Appalachian culture and history since he migrated southward to begin his duties at the WCU museum last December. The veteran curator says that whether you're working at a Midwestern museum, or in one located in the heart of the Southern Appalachians, "There's always more history to learn."

Jones earned bachelor's degrees in history and German at Grinnell College in Iowa and a master's degree in history and certificate in museum studies at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He taught artifact digitization processes at the University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana and held curatorial positions at museums in Illinois and Wisconsin before taking his current job at the Mountain Heritage Center. His duties at the center include writing, designing and building exhibits; overseeing the Mountain Heritage Center's collection of artifacts; and assisting visitors as they learn about the region.

After heading down South, Jones went "Down Under." Late last year, he was notified that he had been chosen to be the first American recipient of the Global Curatorial Fellowship, a new exchange program sponsored by the Curators Committee of the American Association of Museums and the Historians' Special Interest Group of Museums Australia. The fellowship provides an opportunity for an American to travel to Australia and present a research paper at the annual meeting of that country's museum professionals, and a chance for an Australian curator to do likewise at the AAM annual meeting in the United States. Jones took a 14-hour airplane ride to Australia in May and delivered his paper "Remembering World War I Soldiers in the U.S.A." He also attended the AAM meeting in Philadelphia that same month as his Australian counterpart presented a paper for the American group.

Back home in Cullowhee, Jones continues work on the Plott hound exhibit, set to open in October, and on a new version of the museum's permanent exhibit, "The Migration of the Scotch-Irish People." Generally speaking, things are hopping at the museum on the ground floor of WCU's H.F. Robinson Building. "I'm excited to be working at the Mountain Heritage Center during such an exciting time in the museum's history," Jones said.

Scott Philyaw '83 (above, left) and curator Trevor Jones examine a Mountain Heritage Center exhibit. Below, Jones puts the finishing touches on an upcoming display.



MOUNTAIN HERITAGE CENTER
on the ground floor of WCU's H.F. Robinson Administration Building

Hours:
8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday – Wednesday and Friday
8 a.m. – 8 p.m. Thursday
10 a.m. – 5 p.m. Saturday, June – October
No charge for admission



PROUD OF THE PRIDE

Members past and present are invited to attend the presentation of the band world's 'Heisman Trophy'

By BILL STUDENC

For more than a decade, Western Carolina University's marching band has gone by the name "The Pride of the Mountains." An event slated for this fall will provide all the evidence anyone could need that the feeling of pride is justified, as the band will officially receive the highest nation's highest honor in the world of collegiate marching bands.

It goes by the formal name of the Sudler Trophy. Awarded by the John Phillip Sousa Foundation in recognition of an extended record of excellence, it is known informally as the marching band equivalent of college football's Heisman Trophy. And it is coming to Cullowhee on Saturday, Oct. 24.

That is the day when representatives of the Sudler Trophy Committee and the Sousa Foundation will visit Western Carolina for a presentation ceremony. The event is scheduled to take place during halftime of the Catamounts' football game against Southern Conference foe Wofford. Game time is tentatively set for 4 p.m.

Because the trophy is awarded not for just a year or two of outstanding performances, but to reward important contributions to the advancement of the performance standards of college marching bands over a number of years, leaders of The Pride of the Mountains are inviting all former members of the band to return to campus for the presentation ceremony.

"Everyone who has ever marched as a member of the Western Carolina band has played a part in the university's band program receiving this prestigious national honor," said **Bob Buckner '67**, director of athletic bands. "Our student-musicians who will march this year stand on the shoulders of the thousands of band members who have come before them. This award is due to the hard work and dedication of all of our band members, past and present. It also recognizes the contributions of assistant band directors **Matt Henley '93 MA '95** and **Jon Henson '05 MAEd '07**, former students who have risen through the ranks to become crucial members of the music program at WCU."

Because of the significance of the awarding of the Sudler Trophy to the Pride of the Mountains, the annual Alumni Band Weekend, which is traditionally held as part of the final home football game of the season, is being moved up to Oct. 24 so that as many marching band alumni as possible can attend the presentation ceremony. Special reduced ticket prices will be available for former marching band members and their families to attend the game. In addition, band leaders are searching for old band uniforms, instruments, photographs and other items to put on display as part of the Sudler Trophy presentation weekend.

➔ Details about the presentation ceremony, the Alumni Band and related activities are being developed this summer. For the latest information, visit www.prideofthemountains.com.

Western Carolina University's marching band will receive a national honor this fall in recognition of decades of excellence.

OLYMPIC GOLD

A WCU studio engineer wins an Emmy for his work in Beijing

By TERESA KILLIAN

Western Carolina now has three Emmy Award winners on the payroll, including John E. Wells, studio engineer for the university's School of Music. Wells served as an edit systems maintenance engineer for an NBC team recently honored by the National Academy of Television Arts and Sciences with a Sports Emmy Award for Outstanding Technical Team Remote in recognition of its coverage of the 2008 Summer Olympics in Beijing. Team members executed the largest high-definition remote broadcast ever attempted, and the Olympics became the most-watched program in the history of television.

Wells now shares an Emmy bond with Bruce Frazier, WCU's Carol Grotnes Belk Distinguished Professor of Commercial and Electronic Music who twice has been recognized by the Academy of Television Arts and Sciences Emmy for contributions to dramatic underscore and sound mixing for television programs, and Jack Sholder, director of the university's motion picture and television production program, who won an Emmy for his editing work on "3-2-1 Contact."

"It is a special honor to be recognized on a national level for what I do," said Wells, a resident of Sylva. "I am very fortunate and very, very grateful. I was part of an extraordinary team. Everyone that I worked with in Beijing was incredibly helpful and brought something special to the effort."

Wells, who has experience as a technical consultant for audio and video firms, was invited to work five weeks in China assembling and operating temporary edit suites where camera feeds from Olympic event venues were assembled into five- to 30-minute segments. "Anytime something broke or wasn't working right, they would call



me to the edit rooms to fix it," said Wells, who worked 12- to 20-hour shifts. "When it was all over, I broke down the rooms."

Highlights for him included having an up-close view of Olympic moments, such as watching Shawn Johnson win gold on the balance beam, Michael Phelps win his fourth gold, and closing ceremonies. They also included the opportunity to explore China – sampling dumplings and Kung Pao shrimp, and visiting the Forbidden City and Tiananmen Square.

Before joining the WCU staff five years ago, Wells served as technical consultant for firms such as Sony Electronics. He was part of the engineering staff that designed and built the studios in WCU's Center for Applied Technology. As WCU studio engineer, he maintains equipment and functionality and assists faculty and students using the recording studio and edit rooms.

John Wells shares a light moment with Beijing NBC staff members during the 2008 Summer Olympics, where he worked at venues including the National Indoor Stadium (below).



HAPPY TRAILS

WCU's outdoor programs director looks to link to a county greenway

By BESSIE DIETRICH GOGGINS '06

Josh Whitmore, director of outdoor programs for Western Carolina University, is developing a comprehensive plan for a community multiuse trail network, thanks to a grant of \$14,440 from the Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Carolina Foundation. The WCU trail system will connect to the Jackson County Greenway's Project, an initiative under development in the county parks and recreation department to acquire land for a linear park and greenway along the Tuckaseegee River. Together, the trail systems will provide a network consisting of a variety of trail surfaces to suit a host of activities on both WCU and Jackson County properties.

The idea for the trail network surfaced after the fragmentation of the existing gravel trail on campus due to new construction, which forced users onto public roads without sidewalks, coupled with the university's acquisition of land as part of the Millennial Initiative, said Whitmore. "Some of the land too steep for development would be perfect for a multiuse trail facility to allow the campus community access to trails from campus," he said.

The grant is funding the creation of a "master plan," which will bring together interested groups of walkers, trail runners, mountain bikers and hikers to plan a network that will meet everyone's needs, said Whitmore. "The plan will essentially establish a specific route for the trail, access points and features. It also will outline a further plan for construction," he said. The first objective of the project is to complete a perimeter trail and develop access points with additional side loops and trails added later.

The network of trails will enable WCU to provide its on-campus population, the local community and visitors with easy access to healthful, recreational activities. The project's strategy is to provide a trail system in a convenient location, making healthy recreation habits more accessible to the community. "Our trail project can easily be accessed from the greenway's paved or crushed gravel surfaces through the pedestrian tunnel by WCU's softball field," said Whitmore. "This offers a contiguous trail network with the option of the more groomed greenway and the more primitive experience of a mountain trail."

Emily Elders, project manager with the Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department, said the partnership with WCU is an exciting opportunity to improve the quality of life for the entire community. "For our county residents, students and visitors, greenways have the potential to provide increased health and wellness, create alternative transportation systems and, perhaps most importantly, preserve and protect the natural mountain landscapes that all of us enjoy," Elders said. "We are fortunate to find partners as supportive and resourceful as Josh and the outdoor programs staff."

Josh Whitmore maps out part of a proposed trail network.



Creature Comforts

It certainly can be a "wild life" for Western Carolina scientists these days. Faculty and students from several different disciplines are conducting a variety of research projects aimed at unlocking some of the mysteries of the natural world around us – from attempting to save an endangered species of amphibian to helping a rare type of squirrel survive the pressures of development, and from controlling disease-carrying mosquitoes to determining the home territory of the box turtle.



Thinking Outside The Box

Ron Davis toils to improve the chances of a slow-moving reptile

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

Anyone who has witnessed an eastern box turtle trudging across a highway can vouch for the fact that the turtles never go anywhere at a high rate of speed. Faced with a threat – an oncoming car, barking dog or curious human being – the reptile will usually retract its head and legs into its shell, and hope the threat goes away.

It turns out that it also takes an eastern box turtle a long time to reach reproductive age. That's one of the main reasons why the fate of the species in an increasingly developing landscape is a point of concern, says Ron Davis, WCU assistant professor of natural resources conservation and management.

Davis is beginning the second year of a study to determine the effects of habitat fragmentation on the turtle, and to try to figure out some ways to enhance the reptile's habitat to improve its chances of co-existing with humans and their activities. To gain some understanding about how the turtles use their home range and their movement patterns, Davis and several WCU students began tracking turtles last summer with the use of radio telemetry, the same tool used in a previous study of timber rattlesnakes. The students also collected data relevant to the natural aspects of the turtles' home territories.

The research is taking place at the Balsam Mountain Preserve development in Jackson County. The development includes a 3,000-acre area under

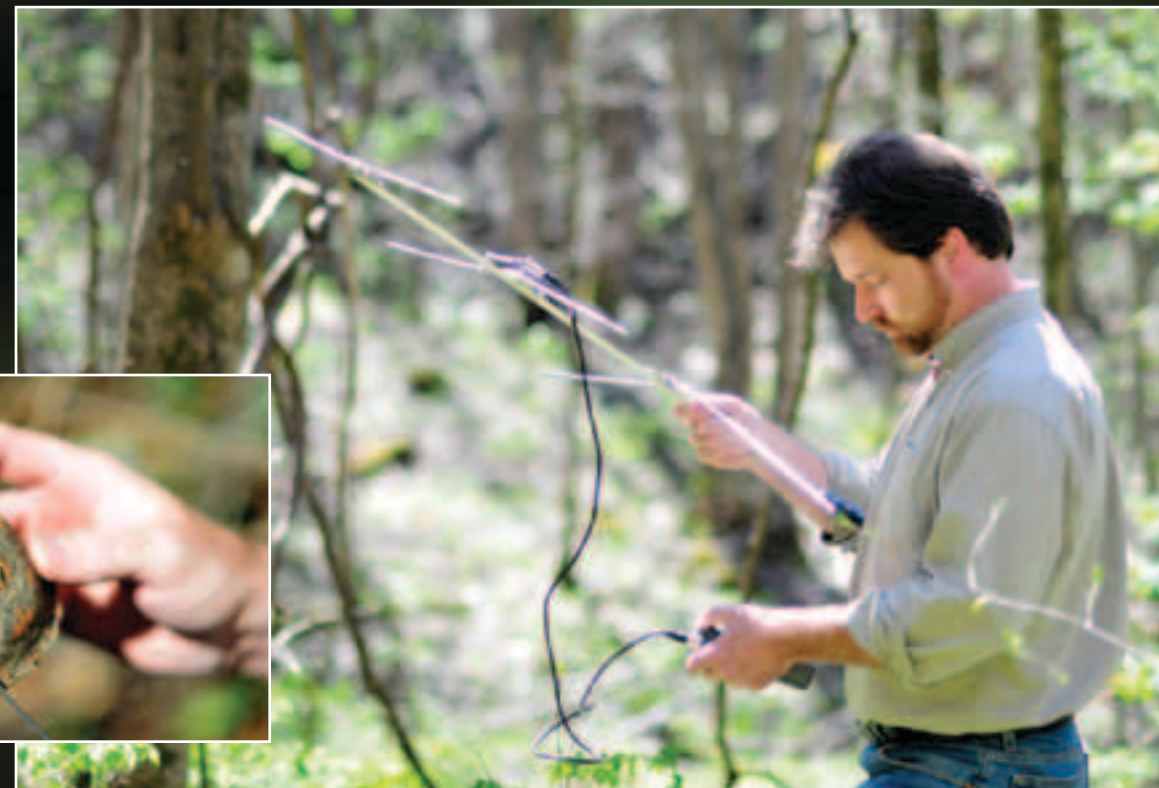
conservation easement, and a non-profit entity that manages the easement, the Balsam Mountain Trust, is providing funding for the study.

Eastern box turtles occupy numerous types of habitat in the Eastern United States, and range from Canada to Florida, and have high-domed shells that are patterned in yellow and black. Davis says it is unfortunate for the turtles that they don't mature and start to reproduce until their seventh to 10th year of life, the females lay only about half a dozen eggs, and the baby turtles that hatch are easy prey for predators. On the other hand, if they survive to become adults, some eastern box turtles can be long-livers and reach the age of 70.

The home territory of the turtles can range in size from one to several football fields. "They are very home-range specific, and don't relocate well," Davis said. "If something happens to a local population of turtles, they can't just bounce back."

Davis said he hopes the turtle-tracking can continue and expand this summer, and he wants to begin a study in which turtles are found, marked and released in order to provide estimates of the turtle population. He also hopes to expand the research into forest areas that are completely protected from human activities.

In the meantime, Davis recommends that anyone who wants to help a turtle cross a highway should relocate the reptile just off the pavement, pointing in the same slow direction of travel as it was before.



Ron Davis uses radio telemetry to track the movements of eastern box turtles.



Brian Byrd (right) captures mosquitoes with the assistance of student Alan Goggins.

Buzz Words

A professor and his students work to decrease mosquito-borne diseases

By BESSIE DIETRICH GOGGINS '06

As spring rolls into summer at Western Carolina University with sunshine and flowers, the campus is abuzz with activity. For Brian Byrd, assistant professor of health sciences, one specific buzz has captured his research interest – the buzz of the mosquito.

With a variety of native and invasive mosquito species in Western North Carolina, Byrd is working on two research projects with the help of undergraduates majoring in environmental health. "We conduct field investigations to better understand the local ecology of La Crosse encephalitis, a mosquito-borne disease endemic to WNC and the state's No. 1 arthropod-borne viral disease," said Byrd. "We are gathering baseline surveillance data to get a feel for the local seasonal abundance and population structure trends."

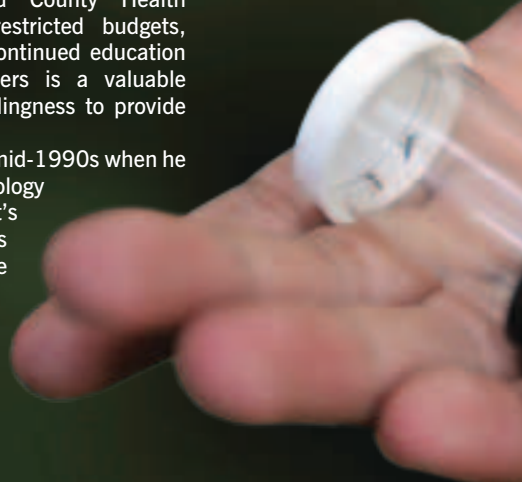
The La Crosse virus affects mostly children younger than age 16 and can cause an acute inflammation of the brain. "Although cases of La Crosse encephalitis occur every year in WNC, the transmission of the virus is likely underrecognized," said Byrd. "This disease is rarely fatal, but a child from Transylvania County died from the virus in 2001. In addition, the costs of hospitalization, long-term care and time lost from work for family members can be staggering. The social costs from adverse effects on IQ and school performance post-infection also are underreported."

Byrd also uses a molecular research lab with his students, investigating the ability of molecular markers to identify cryptic or sister mosquito species. "We are developing molecular tests to aid in the rapid identification of local disease vectors and studying the validity of previously recognized sister species of the pitcher plant mosquito," he said.

Byrd says he hopes his research will increase regional awareness of the disease and risk factors for disease transmission, such as artificial containers like abandoned tires and buckets capable of holding water. "This is a preventable illness and relatively simple measures decrease the likelihood of transmission," he said. "In addition, WCU is expanding its role as a regional resource for health departments and environmental health specialists. We will increase our continuing education programs for environmental health practitioners and respond rapidly to requests for assistance when suspect transmission or outbreak investigations are required."

Having baseline information provided by Byrd's research helps local health officials better understand what is endemic in the local area, which helps plan interventions and educate the public, said Carmine Rocco, director of the Haywood County Health Department. "Given our current restricted budgets, having a local resource to provide continued education for environmental health practitioners is a valuable resource, and we appreciate his willingness to provide assistance," said Rocco.

Byrd says his passion began in the mid-1990s when he enrolled in an undergraduate parasitology class and read Laurie Garrett's "Coming Plague," which documents the emergence of diseases. Now he instills similar research interests in WCU undergraduates. "What is most gratifying, and probably the most significant in the long run, is involving undergraduates in notable research projects," he said.



Sounding His Frog Horn

Joe Pechmann is helping rescue one of the country's most endangered creatures

By RANDALL HOLCOMBE

When it comes down to cuteness, dusky gopher frogs can compete with Kermit the Frog of Muppets fame, says Joe Pechmann. That's good news for the gopher frogs, which are in need of a few good friends, since they are one of the nation's most endangered species. Pechmann, WCU associate professor of biology, and other scientists are trying to save the frogs from extinction.

As a Boy Scout growing up in Binghamton, N.Y., Pechmann found insects to be nature's most interesting creatures. Amphibians such as frogs, toads and salamanders didn't capture his interest until he earned his master's degree in zoology and began working for a university research laboratory in South Carolina.

Joe Pechmann studies tadpoles as part of his effort to save the endangered gopher frog.



After earning a doctoral degree in zoology from Duke University, engaging in postdoctoral studies and teaching at the University of New Orleans, Pechmann joined the WCU faculty in August 2006.

While at New Orleans in 2001, Pechmann became part of the effort to save the gopher frog, which historically bred in temporary ponds found in the longleaf pine forests of Mississippi, Louisiana and Alabama. Widespread alteration and destruction of both the breeding ponds and pine forests had a devastating effect on the frogs, and now the only known wild populations, including fewer than 100 mature adults, are found in and around two ponds in southern Mississippi.

During the period 1999 to 2007, the main temporary pond in Mississippi dried up before tadpoles could metamorphose into frogs, and no juvenile frogs were produced, Pechmann said. To try to offset that, Pechmann and his colleagues started raising gopher frog tadpoles in tanks located near a natural breeding pond. That has kept the creatures from becoming extinct, he said.

One experiment Pechmann has been leading since 2005 involves measuring the growth and survival rate of juvenile frogs in a forest subjected to controlled fires, compared to the survival rate in areas where fire has been suppressed. The research frogs are contained in 16 enclosures, each measuring 50 feet by 50 feet. When Hurricane Katrina walloped the Gulf Coast in 2005, the enclosures were damaged, and the frogs hopped away, Pechmann said. Seven WCU students helped Pechmann repair the enclosures during the 2007-08 holiday break, and another three students have participated in the gopher frog project over the past three years. Pechmann said the research is having an impact in that land and pond management practices are being adjusted to help the frogs survive.

"We have an ethical duty to share the Earth with other animals, and if we've done things that threaten their existence, we should do our best to help them out," he said.

Pechmann's frogs do have some other endearing characteristics, aside from cuteness. When calling for a mate, the males sound exactly like a person snoring, and if you pick one up, it covers its eyes with its front feet.



Nicole Allman conducts DNA analysis to learn more about the Carolina northern flying squirrel.

Crossing Guard

A rare species of squirrel gets an assist traversing a mountain highway

By BESSIE DIETRICH GOGGINS '06

Why did the squirrel cross the road? To get to the other side, of course. But in the case of the endangered Carolina northern flying squirrels living in Western North Carolina's Unicoi Mountains, they need a little help to cross the Cherohala Skyway.

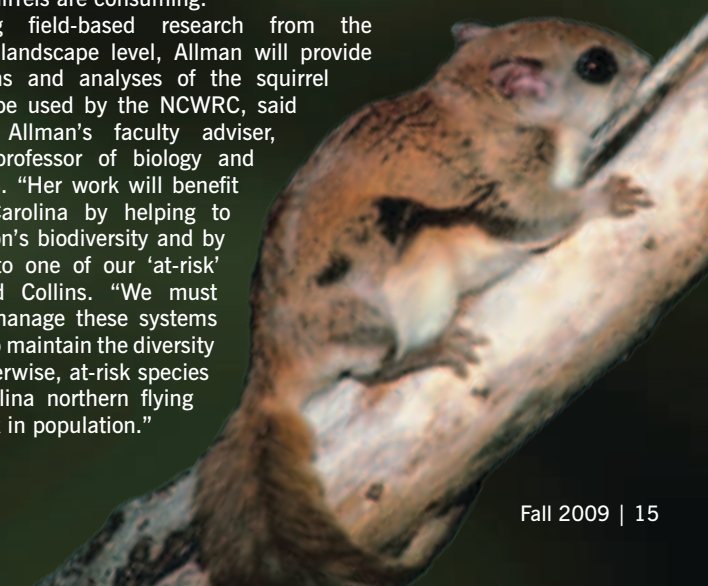
A 36-mile-long national scenic byway that connects the Cherokee and Nantahala national forests, the Cherohala Skyway bisects the habitat of an isolated population of squirrels, making them vulnerable to disease and predators. Although they are known as flying squirrels, these small creatures actually glide from tree to tree using as parachutes folds of skin running from their front to back legs. To help the squirrels find new areas to live and forage, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission and Duke Energy created three sets of artificial trees that incorporate wooden poles with launching pads, hoping the squirrels will use them to glide across the road.

Nicole Allman, a biology graduate student who won the inaugural N.C. Research Award at WCU's Graduate Research Symposium, decided to help the endangered squirrels, as well. Allman has explored the small population of the squirrel along the skyway, with help from WCU's Southern Appalachian Biodiversity and Ecology Center and funding from the NCWRC. "The Cherohala Skyway creates a partial barrier for access to other possible suitable habitats," said Allman. "The connectedness, quality and size of the remaining habitat available to the squirrels is important to sustain – if not increase – their population." If the squirrel population continues to decline, it could affect the health of their habitat. By depositing undigested fungus in the soil,

the squirrels help tree roots take up water and nutrients throughout WNC's high-elevation forests.

Using a multifaceted approach, Allman is analyzing the squirrel habitat from three research directions to gain information that will aid in the proper management of the forest and help prohibit further loss of the squirrel. "First, I have documented the vegetation at points where squirrels have either been trapped or have denned and also at random points where there is no squirrel activity," she said. "Second, I have a geographic information systems component where I will compare the three known squirrel habitats to other areas along the Cherohala. Finally, there is an analysis component where DNA from squirrel scat will be studied to determine the food items the squirrels are consuming."

By conducting field-based research from the molecular to the landscape level, Allman will provide direct observations and analyses of the squirrel habitat that can be used by the NCWRC, said Beverly Collins, Allman's faculty adviser, WCU associate professor of biology and director of SABEC. "Her work will benefit Western North Carolina by helping to maintain the region's biodiversity and by calling attention to one of our 'at-risk' ecosystems," said Collins. "We must understand and manage these systems and species well to maintain the diversity of the region. Otherwise, at-risk species such as the Carolina northern flying squirrel will shrink in population."



THE GOAL'S IN SIGHT

The university will pause this fall to celebrate its first comprehensive fundraising campaign as part of Homecoming Week activities

By BILL STUDENC

As Western Carolina prepares to mark its 120th anniversary this year, the university is gearing up for one of the busiest fall semesters in recent memory, with opening ceremonies planned for a new residence hall and a new dining facility, an official groundbreaking celebration to mark the beginning of construction on a health sciences building, and the presentation of a national honor to the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band (see related stories elsewhere in this issue). As if that wasn't enough to keep campus event planners scrambling this summer, WCU also is gearing up to celebrate the conclusion of a successful fundraising effort. The Campaign for Western Carolina, with its theme of "Creating Extraordinary Opportunities" and a goal of \$40 million in contributions to the university, will come to a close this year.

Several public events are being planned to commemorate the completion of the campaign, with activities scheduled Oct. 15-17 to coincide with Homecoming 2009. "We want as many members of the Western Carolina family as possible to join in celebrating this major milestone in the life of the university," said Clifton Metcalf, vice chancellor for advancement and external affairs. "Homecoming Week seems to be the perfect time, because it brings together representatives from all of our various constituencies, from the alumni who return to their alma mater to the students who take part in the many Homecoming events, and from our friends and benefactors who like to visit campus during the fall, to our faculty and staff who are teaching and providing services to students."

Although plans are still being finalized this summer, the tentative schedule for the campaign celebration begins with a luncheon to honor major contributors, starting at noon Thursday, Oct. 15, in the Grandroom of A.K. Hinds University Center. The by-invitation lunch will be followed by "Extraordinary Opportunities Created," a public ceremony at which the final tally of the fundraising campaign will be officially revealed, at 2 p.m. in the recital hall of the Coulter Building.

Ronald A. Johnson (left), dean of the College of Business, thanks John A. Allison IV, then-chairman and chief executive officer of BB&T, for a \$500,000 gift for creation of an endowed professorship in capitalism.



Chancellor John Bardo (left) and David Rhoades of the Mountaintop Golf and Lake Club in Cashiers look over a portion of Cullowhee Creek that will be the subject of an environmental restoration project made possible through a \$1 million contribution that also led to establishment of an endowed professorship in engineering.



For more information, contact the Office of Development at (828) 227-7024 or visit campaign.wcu.edu for more information, including an up-to-date listing of events.

A campus campaign celebration will be held from 3 until 5 p.m. on the University Center lawn, leading up to the annual float-building party as student groups and campus organizations create their entries for the Homecoming parade. The celebration is scheduled to include a free concert by country music performer **Matt Stillwell '98**, a Sylva native and former Catamount baseball player.

As part of activities on tap for Friday, Oct. 16, colleges and units of the university will hold open houses, demonstrations and symposia throughout the day to showcase their programs and initiatives, and highlight how the Campaign for Western Carolina has provided the additional resources needed to help build the quality of academic and athletic programs through scholarships, endowed professorships and programmatic support.

The second annual Scholarship Lunch is set for noon Oct. 16 in the Grandroom of the University Center, providing an opportunity for many recipients of scholarships to meet and thank their benefactors. "Our inaugural scholarship lunch last fall was a tremendous hit," Metcalf said. "The students really enjoyed having a chance to personally thank the people who established the endowed scholarship funds that made it possible for them to come to WCU, and the benefactors who have so graciously given their philanthropic support to the university really appreciated getting to know the students they are helping."



Sue Wakeley (left) and husband Jack, former interim chancellor at WCU, visit the track-and-field athletes who benefit from their gifts to the university.

GIVING LEVELS CAN CLIMB HIGHER THROUGH THE ELINGBURG CHALLENGE

Friends of Western Carolina will have a chance to take their gifts to a higher level in 2009-10, thanks to the Elingburg Challenge.

Wesley Elingburg '78 says he understands the importance of the Loyalty Fund and wants to promote its mission of providing merit-based scholarships to WCU students. That's why he has issued a challenge, offering to match new and increased gifts to the Loyalty Fund totaling \$1,000.

"The need for leadership giving to the Loyalty Fund is increasingly vital as students struggle to pay for their education while facing new challenges created by the current economic downturn," said Natalie Clark, director of annual giving. "Gifts

totaling \$1,000 or more are not only eligible to be matched through the Elingburg Challenge, but also will qualify donors for an invitation to the Annual Scholarship Luncheon, where they can meet students who have benefited from their generosity."

Elingburg is no stranger to giving to WCU. He has been a strong supporter of the Loyalty Fund for more than 17 years. His 2006 gift of \$250,000 enabled the university to obtain state matching funds and create the Elingburg Distinguished Professorship in Business Innovation, a position held by former corporate finance executive Louis Buck Jr.



For more information on the Elingburg Challenge, visit loyaltyfund.wcu.edu.

SUMMIT MEETING

An adventurous alumnus donates his collection of mountaineering books to Hunter Library

By CHRISTY McCARLEY '71 MA '78

A few weeks after his 80th birthday, **Dr. Robert Mayo Failing '51** left Southern California for a road trip. Traveling solo, he was driving more than 2,300 miles to attend a meeting of the Western Carolina University Foundation board of directors and to deliver a book collection to Hunter Library.

It was late November, five days before the fall session of the board. Since becoming a member in 1990, Failing has rarely missed a meeting. Fellow board members know him as a widely respected forensic pathologist and part-time adventurer. In midlife, he began a quest to climb the world's tallest mountains, reaching the highest points of six continents and all 50 states before he finally retired.

Now, he says, his favorite expression is a famous mountaineering adage: "There are bold climbers, and there are old climbers. But there are no old, bold climbers."

But mountains – Rockies, Andes, Himalayas and Smokies – still hold that special allure. And mountains and the world-class climbers who challenge them were in the titles of nearly every one of the 376 books traveling cross-county with him.

As Failing was driving to Cullowhee, **George Frizzell '77 MA '81**, head of Special Collections, was busy clearing shelves at Hunter Library, getting ready to receive what he knew would be a unique addition. "Dr. Failing had e-mailed a list of his books, and I realized this

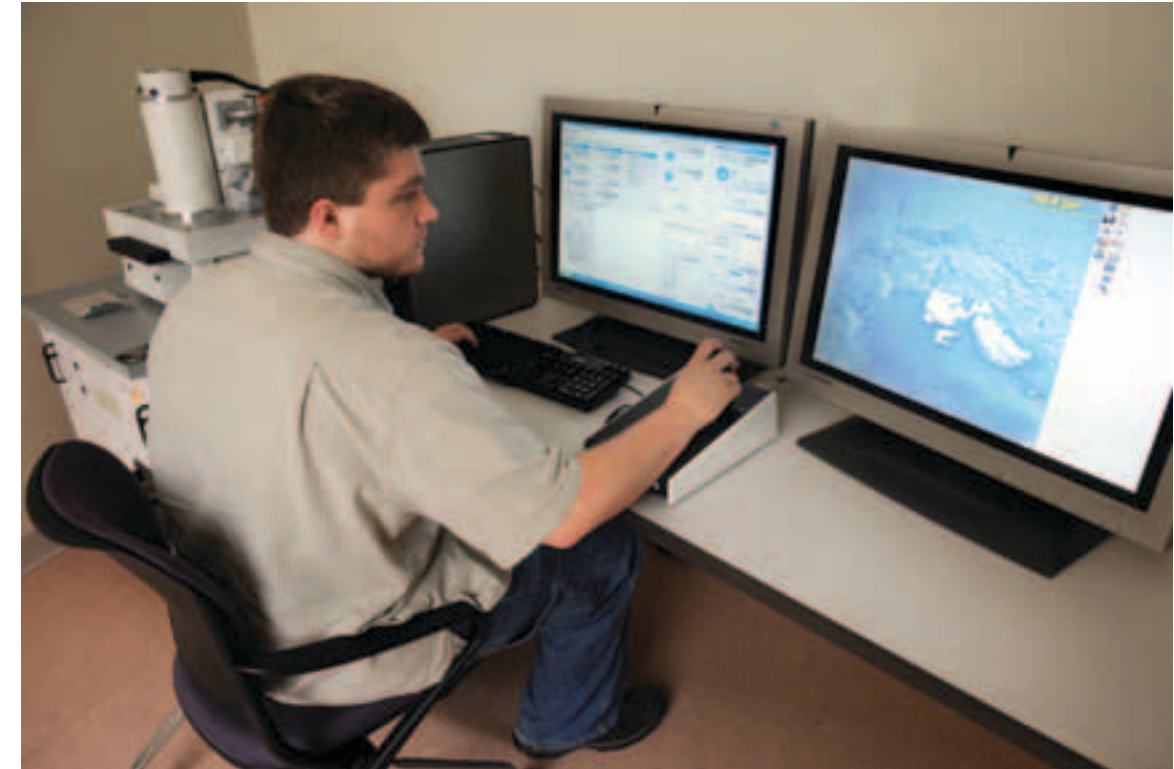
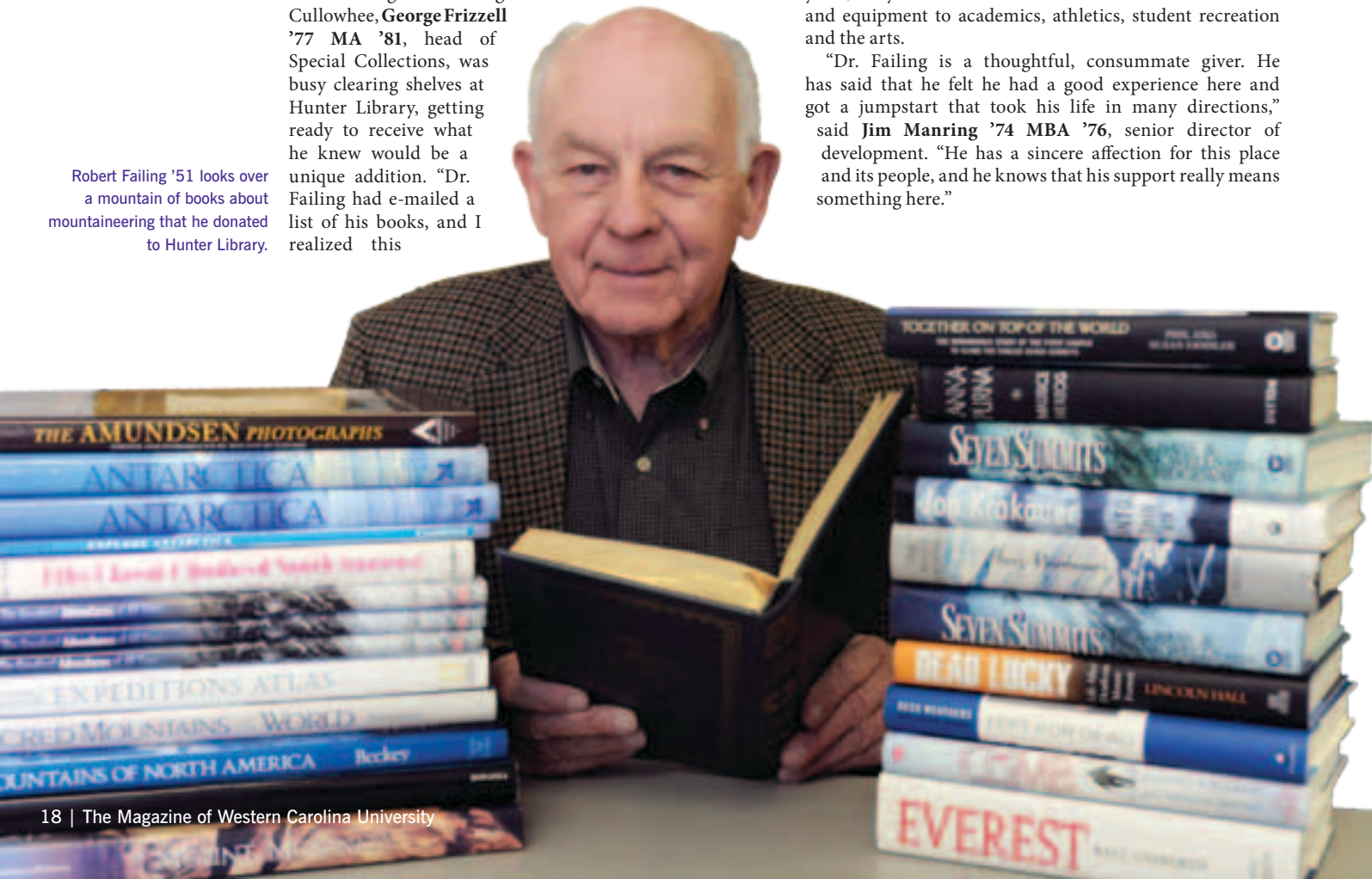
was a collection that had taken several decades to compile, and it was going to be significant for us," Frizzell said. "Given our location in one of the great mountain areas of the world, there will be a lot of people with an affinity for these books."

The collection, with an appraised value of \$15,040, includes a special leather-bound edition of "View from the Summit" signed by Sir Edmund Hillary and a first edition of "Alone" signed by Adm. Richard Byrd. Virtually all of the world's famous climbers and mountaineering authors are represented, including Maurice Herzog of France; Antoli Boukreev of Russia; the British climber Chris Bonington; Australia's Lincoln Hall; and Dick Bass, Bradford Washington, Jon Krakauer and David Breashears of the United States. Many books include notes written to Failing by authors and climbers he knows personally.

Failing is a recipient of WCU's Distinguished Alumnus Award, and he received an honorary doctorate from the university in 2007. In 1956, he finished medical school at Duke University and began his professional career in California, retiring in 1994. With wife Nancyann, Failing is a longstanding benefactor of the university. Through the years, they have made substantial contributions in cash and equipment to academics, athletics, student recreation and the arts.

"Dr. Failing is a thoughtful, consummate giver. He has said that he felt he had a good experience here and got a jumpstart that took his life in many directions," said **Jim Manning '74 MBA '76**, senior director of development. "He has a sincere affection for this place and its people, and he knows that his support really means something here."

Robert Failing '51 looks over a mountain of books about mountaineering that he donated to Hunter Library.



Jason Proffitt gets valuable hands-on experience with an advanced scanning electron microscope donated to WCU by the US Conec Corporation.

MAGNIFYING CLASS

The Kimmel School receives a high-tech microscope for a new materials research laboratory

By BESSIE DIETRICH GOGGINS '06

Western Carolina's Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology recently established a materials microscopy research laboratory made possible by a donation from the US Conec Corporation in Hickory. The centerpiece for the microscopy laboratory is an advanced scanning electron microscope that views objects at a higher magnification than other types of microscopes. By shooting electrons at the surface of an object, which is in an airless vacuum, the microscope can show viewers the object's surface at a closer level, as well as provide three-dimensional features using scattered electrons and gamma rays bounced off the surface. The microscope is valued at \$55,700.

"With this microscope, we can look at submicron-sized features of metals, plastics or anything else," said Phillip A. Sanger, director of WCU's Center for Rapid Product Realization and associate professor of engineering technology. "Typically, an optical microscope can only provide two-dimensional views and at much less magnification. The Rapid Center has served more than 200 companies in the region by helping create needed products. "We are the engagement arm of the Kimmel School," said Sanger. "We work with the outside community, building relationships with companies to help them create the new products they need to grow."

The center has collaborated with US Conec on several occasions. "We have worked with the Kimmel School successfully for several years and watched the school's capability grow, so we naturally thought of them first when

we decided to donate the microscope," said Bill Blubaugh, president of US Conec. "The microscope is very versatile in design projects and in developing manufacturing processes."

WCU faculty, staff and mentored students will work with the microscope to examine the end results of their projects. The recently installed Oxford Laser machining system creates submicron surface features that can only be seen with the new scanning electron microscope. "Our goal is to move an idea into a product quickly," said Sanger. "With access to the scanning electron microscope, we now can evaluate our products at a higher magnification."

In addition to benefits in the classroom, the scanning electron microscope will help students once they graduate from WCU. "Having experience using a scanning electron microscope provides a broader base of skills to students and makes them more attractive to manufacturing companies that require engineers," said Blubaugh.

Sanger agrees. "In many industries, a scanning electron microscope is like a wrench or a screwdriver, because it's an integral part of the engineering process," he said. "It's an opportunity for WCU students to get acquainted with a state-of-the-art tool to prepare them for their careers, and it lets them see objects at a level the naked eye never will."



For more information about WCU's microscopy laboratory or the Center for Rapid Product Realization, contact Sanger by telephone at (828) 227-7368 or via e-mail at sanger@wcu.edu.



BATTLING ROUGH WATERS



“The plan was to pick a line, deal with whatever happened in the middle and be in the right place at the end of the rapid.”

– Katie Hilleke MAT '09

A cancer survivor applies her whitewater lessons to help inspire others

By TERESA KILLIAN

When a rising river in Ecuador swept kayaker **Katie Hilleke MAT '09** under a house-sized boulder in March 2001, everyone thought the bubbly Alabama native was a goner. “I ended up in a cave under the rock no one could see. My brother was able to hear my voice coming through a crack in the rocks about 20 feet away from the river bank and crawl through to rescue me,” said Hilleke.

Some would have sold their gear and given up the sport, but not Hilleke. Rather, she credits extreme whitewater paddling with preparing her to combat what would stop her in her tracks in 2006 – cancer. Hilleke was sleeping in netted hammocks, sampling banana and pineapple smoothies, and practicing her Spanish during the first all-women’s kayaking expedition to Honduras when relentless abdominal pain and vomiting seized her. “No one at the hospital spoke English, so we were communicating in Spanish. This was great under normal circumstances, but I happened to be in severe pain,” she said.

Frightened by plans for exploratory surgery, her friends finagled an emergency medical evacuation to the United States, where Hilleke was diagnosed with colon cancer. Determined to stay positive, she approached treatment decisions as a dangerous rapid that she could not portage. She would visualize a route and paddle in, knowing it would challenge everything in her and require her to experience its power without being overturned or engulfed by it. “The plan was to pick a line, deal with whatever happened in the middle and be in the right place at the end of the rapid,” said Hilleke. “I could do this.”

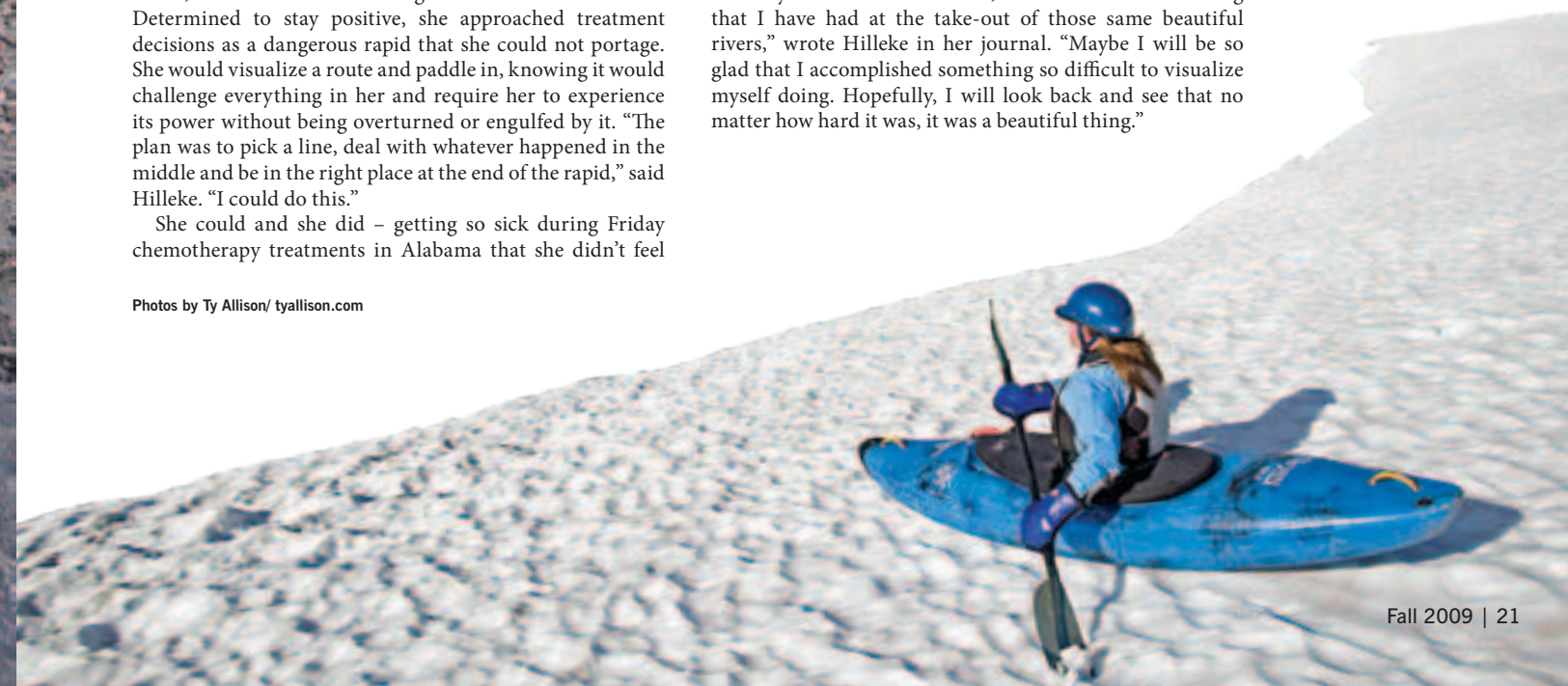
She could and she did – getting so sick during Friday chemotherapy treatments in Alabama that she didn’t feel

well enough to watch TV, yet recovering in time to attend Wednesday WCU graduate courses in teaching English to speakers of other languages. There, her enthusiasm for life and learning inspired fellow students and instructors, said Chandrika Balasubramanian, program director. Christopher Blake, assistant professor of English, praised Hilleke’s can-do attitude and **Patsy Miller MAED '82**, director of WCU Programs in Asheville, noted the adventurous spirit that led Hilleke to spend a semester teaching English in Japan.

Ready to get back in her boat after her last chemotherapy in February 2007, Hilleke set out to paddle 300 miles in two months to support the Lance Armstrong Foundation, which unites people to fight cancer, and First Descents, a kayaking and outdoor adventure experience for young adults with cancer. “I needed to put some miles between me and cancer,” said Hilleke. When she finished, she had logged 363.3 miles in Colorado, California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Alaska, and SELF magazine featured her in a multi-page spread titled “Fighting back with fun and fitness.”

“Maybe when this is all over, I will have the same feeling that I have had at the take-out of those same beautiful rivers,” wrote Hilleke in her journal. “Maybe I will be so glad that I accomplished something so difficult to visualize myself doing. Hopefully, I will look back and see that no matter how hard it was, it was a beautiful thing.”

Photos by Ty Allison/ tyallison.com



Come Home to Cullowhee

HOME COMING 2009

OCTOBER 16-18

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16

Times and locations to be announced:
Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology Open House.

College of Health and Human Sciences Alumni Lecture Series.

9-11:30 a.m. – School of Art and Design Open House. Fine and Performing Arts Center art wing.

Noon – Alumni Scholarship Golf Tournament, a Homecoming tradition, tees off at Laurel Ridge Country Club in Waynesville. Shotgun start. Cost: \$80 per person, includes fees and cart. Four-person “captains choice” format. Refreshments available during play. Social following the tournament. RSVP is required by Friday, Oct. 9. Call the Office of Alumni Affairs at (877) 440-9990 or (828) 227-7335, or e-mail magill@wcu.edu.

2 p.m. – **The Last Lecture.** Winford Gordon, assistant professor of psychology, presents “Listen Carefully in Case Life Happens” in the theater of A.K. Hinds University Center.

2:30 p.m. – **School of Music Alumni Recital.** Recital hall of the Coulter Building.

3 p.m. – **College of Arts and Sciences Alumni Awards and Reception.** Location TBA.

6 p.m. – **Soccer.** The defending SoCon champion Catamounts take on the College of Charleston Cougars at the Catamount Athletic Complex.

6:15 p.m. – **Homecoming 2009 Main Street Parade in Sylva.** Cheer as community and student floats, Western Carolina cheerleaders, football team, Homecoming Court and Catamount Marching Band parade through downtown Sylva. Prizes awarded for best floats; winners announced during Saturday’s football game.

8 p.m. – **Spirit Night.** Immediately following the soccer match join students, faculty, staff, and alumni for a pep rally, music and food at the Catamount Athletic Complex.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17

10 a.m.-noon – **WCU Alumni Brunch.** Annual brunch open to all WCU alumni, with special recognition for the classes of 2004, 1999, 1994, 1989, 1984, 1979 and 1974. A.K. Hinds University Center Multipurpose Room. \$10 per person. RSVP by Friday, Oct 9. Call the Office of Alumni Affairs at (877) 440-9990 or (828) 227-7335, or e-mail magill@wcu.edu

10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. – **College of Business Homecoming Welcome.** Forsyth Building.

Noon-2 p.m. – **College of Health and Human Services Open House.** Moore Hall.

1-3 p.m. – **College of Education and Allied Professions Open House.** Killian Building.

1-3 p.m. – **College of Fine and Performing Arts Reception.** The Star Lobby of Fine and Performing Arts Center.

1-3 p.m. – **WCU Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Alumni Cookout.** Judaculla House at The Village. RSVP by Oct. 9. (877) 440-9990, (828) 227-7335, or e-mail magill@wcu.edu

1-3:30 p.m. – **Tailgating.** Prior to kickoff of the WCU vs. The Citadel football game.

4 p.m. – **Football.** The Catamounts do battle against The Citadel Bulldogs in the cozy confines of Whitmire Stadium and Bob Waters Field. For tickets, contact the WCU Ticket Office at (800) 344-6928.

7:30-8:30 p.m. – **WCU African-American Alumni Postgame Reception.** Ramsey Center Hospitality Room. RSVP by Oct. 9. (877) 440-9990, (828) 227-7335 or e-mail magill@wcu.edu

8:30 p.m. – **Stompfest 2009,** a step show competition featuring African-American fraternities and sororities in the Ramsey Regional Activity Center. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. For tickets or information, contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs at (828) 227-2276.

11 p.m.-2 a.m. – **Stompfest Afterparty.** A.K. Hinds University Center Grandroom. Admission to the party is \$4 with a Stompfest ticket stub and \$5 without. For more information, contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs at (828) 227-2276.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18

2 p.m. – **Soccer.** The defending SoCon champion Catamounts take on The Citadel at the Catamount Athletic Complex.

3 p.m. – **Inspirational Choir Concert.** This crowd-pleasing event will bring Homecoming Weekend to a close with a performance in the A.K. Hinds University Center Grandroom. For more information, contact the Office of Multicultural Affairs at (828) 227-2276.

➔ For more information about Homecoming activities, including an updated schedule of events, visit www.wcu-alumni.com

HOME COMING WEEK TO INCLUDE VISIT BY VIETNAM MOVING WALL

The Moving Wall, a half-size replica of the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., will be on display near the Western Carolina University campus during the week of Homecoming 2009.

Visitors will be able to view the wall at Monteith Park in Dillsboro beginning at 6 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 15, through noon Monday, Oct. 19. A memorial service is set for noon Saturday, Oct. 17. The event is sponsored by the Jackson County Chamber of Commerce.

“The Vietnam Moving Wall is a significant part of history, and we feel blessed and privileged to be able to offer this experience in Jackson County,” said **Julie Spiro ’98**, executive director of the chamber. “We expect as many as 40,000 people to visit during the four-day period, and we encourage all WCU alumni and fans who plan to attend Homecoming to take advantage of this opportunity.”

For information on the wall, call the chamber at (800) 962-1911.

16 SPORTS, 322 ATHLETES ONE GOAL
WCU ATHLETICS



Western Carolina's athletics program has a new look for its marketing and promotional materials this year. Featuring student-athletes from the university's intercollegiate sports programs, the campaign – with its moody imagery, purple tint and gold color on balls, bats and other equipment – is intended to evoke the intensity and excitement of Catamount athletics.

TEAM BUILDING FROM TRAGEDY

The loss of a fellow Catamount is bringing the football team closer together

By BRANDON DEMERY

Less than two months before the football Catamounts were to kick off their season with a game against Vanderbilt, the entire athletic department of Western Carolina was dealt a crippling blow. On the afternoon of July 8, Ja'Quayvin Smalls, defensive back for the football team, passed away at Harris Regional Hospital in Sylva after collapsing during a voluntary off-season workout session at E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. Smalls, a junior transfer from Georgia Military College, was enrolled in the second session of summer courses that began the previous day.

"Any loss of life is a tragedy, but it is especially tragic when someone is taken from us at such a young age," said Chip Smith, WCU director of athletics. While the sudden loss of Smalls remains on the minds of those within the campus community, the WCU football program is moving forward with true resilience by keeping alive the spirit of a fallen Catamount, said Smith.

Although Smalls was only with his new teammates for a brief amount of time, it was enough for them to see Smalls was someone who would not let being a newcomer hold him back. "Ja'Quayvin was a real hard worker. He had a real passion for the game and he was a fighter," said Gene Singletary, a senior defensive lineman. Singletary said he especially noticed Smalls' poise as a transfer player, and recognized that he had come to Cullowhee determined to make a difference – a determination that continues to inspire his teammates. "Players are pushing themselves more during practice," he said. "Some of the guys are even dedicating the season to him in respect for his passion for the game."

Equipment manager Mike Taylor said that Smalls' locker will be encased and kept in game-day condition, and that no other player will wear Smalls' number 3 for the entire season. The Catamounts also will be donning "JS" decals on their helmets this year out of respect for their fallen teammate. "In the short time we knew him, Ja'Quayvin touched the hearts of a lot of our players," said Head Coach Dennis Wagner. "We're doing everything we can to keep his memory alive and let everyone know that Ja'Quayvin will always be a part of the Catamount family."

Losing a friend and teammate is creating a new sense of camaraderie among players. "This is the closest we've ever been as a team. We're all reaching out to try and be there for one another," said third-year tight end Chris Everett. "There is usually tension among the team between newcomers and the veteran players, but this tragedy has gotten rid of it all," Everett said.

"Losing a player with Smalls' intensity has unified us and showed us the true importance of developing strong relationships on and off the field," he said. "We witnessed someone push himself until he couldn't anymore, and we're on a mission this year. We intend on giving our all in every game. We're all playing for Ja'Quayvin and his memory."

Smalls was laid to rest in his hometown of Mount Pleasant, S.C., on July 13 with 45 WCU student-athletes and five members of the coaching staff in attendance. Hospital personnel are awaiting the result of medical tests to determine the cause of death.

Brandon Demery is a senior at Western Carolina University from Raleigh. He is majoring in English/professional writing with a minor in social work and communication.



The locker of Ja'Quayvin Smalls will be kept in game-day condition this year, and his football teammates will don his initials on their helmets.



Photo by Jack Orton, Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

SHEAR RELIEF

A former Catamount adds to his Major League resumé – as team barber

By TOM HAUDRICOURT

Ken Macha has become accustomed to calling on dependable relief pitcher **Mark DiFelice** to help get out of jams this season. But the Milwaukee Brewers' manager recently summoned DiFelice to escape a different kind of mess: a bad haircut.

As the unofficial team barber, DiFelice did his best to correct some questionable work on Macha by a would-be Edward Scissorhands. "They just cut one side too short and kind of got the 'power alleys' going," DiFelice recalled with a laugh. "I just evened it out for him on the front."

On any given day, DiFelice can be found in front of a sink and mirror on the outskirts of the clubhouse bathroom, giving a teammate a trim. He keeps a set of professional clippers with him at all times, home and away.

How exactly did DiFelice become the Brewers' version of Floyd the Barber? "My grandmother was a hairdresser and my aunt owns a hair salon now. I guess you can say it's in my blood," said DiFelice, who has done yeoman work on the mound as well this season.

DiFelice first tried his hand at hair-cutting at Western Carolina University. He and his roommate didn't have money for professional haircuts, so they went to Wal-Mart and bought a cheap pair of clippers. "We started cutting each other's hair," recalled DiFelice. "The first year we were pretty much bald. We'd try to give each other a nice cut, but we were so bad we ended up shaving it all off. I started getting good and he continued to mess my hair up, so I started cutting my own hair."

Once word got around the Brewers' clubhouse that DiFelice knew his way around a pair of clippers, teammates started lining up for haircuts. The 32-year-old right-hander stops short of asking for appointments but tries to accommodate everyone. "If I can fit you in that day, I will," he said. "If not, we'll do it the next day."

DiFelice, making a tad more than the rookie salary of \$400,000, doesn't charge for haircuts. On occasion, he'll find a tip in his locker, or some other accommodation. The obvious question is why players, with all of their money, don't go to a professional salon and pay to have their hair cut. The answer is two-fold: convenience and familiarity.

DiFelice brags that he hasn't had a complaint in "about nine years," which if you know ballplayers, is quite an accomplishment. After toiling in the minors and independent ball for nearly 11 years before finally getting to the big leagues last year, DiFelice isn't ready to turn in his glove and spikes for a barber's chair just yet.

But when his playing days are over, might DiFelice set up shop back home in Pennsylvania? "I probably could. My aunt told me she was going to put a chair for me in the back of her salon in Newtown Square because she has a lot of walk-ins," he said.

As for the possibility that a teammate might not be completely satisfied with DiFelice's in-house work, he refers to the oldest joke in the barber's handbook. "You know what they say the difference is between a good haircut and a bad haircut?" he asks. "Two weeks."

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MR. HOLLAND'S OPUS

A job in the minor leagues enables a former WCU pitcher to see much of America

By DANNY HIRT '73

Former Western Carolina pitcher **Greg Holland** has two families to thank for his career in professional baseball – his family at home that introduced him to the game, and his on-campus family that nurtured his skills. Holland, of Marion, said he discovered his interest in America's pastime when he was young. "My dad always played weekend softball," he said, adding that he and his brother Chase tagged along for many of those games. "And I got into it as soon as possible."

After receiving no significant offers to play elsewhere, Holland decided to walk on at Western Carolina. "I wanted to stay in the state and close to home," he said. WCU fit the bill because it was only about a 90-minute drive from home. While playing under then-WCU coach **Todd Raleigh '91 MAEd '94**, Holland said he learned much about the game – and about life in general.

"He really helped build us up," Holland said. Raleigh had a knack for getting more out of the players than they thought they could produce, he said. "He took a team of good old country boys and wanted to prove that we could play." Under Raleigh's leadership, the Catamounts earned the Southern Conference championship in 2007, Holland's last season in Cullowhee.

Holland said that as far as baseball goes, "Coach Raleigh was probably the focal point. He saw a lot in me and helped me reach my potential." Holland also received instruction and inspiration from players and coaches who had been a part of the Western Carolina community, including **Paul Menhart '04**, **Jason Beverlin '01**, the late **Keith LeClaire '89** and former WCU skipper Jack Leggett (now Clemson's head coach).

After signing with the Kansas City Royals in 2007, he spent time in Idaho Falls, Idaho, before going to Wilmington, Del., for the 2008 season. After a stint as a relief pitcher with the Texas League's Northwest Arkansas Naturals, Holland was promoted to 3-A Omaha (Neb.) of the Pacific Coast League in late July. In his three years as a minor league player, Holland has had an opportunity to see much of America – from experiencing snow still on the ground during baseball seasons in Idaho and Montana to the 100-degree temperatures on a recent Naturals' visit to San Antonio.

Holland said he's adjusted to the daily routine during the season. With most games going late into the evenings, his day usually gets started around 11 a.m. when he wakes up, showers, then heads down for a meal. On game days, he goes to the field for mid-afternoon exercising, which includes a healthy dose of stretching. When the Naturals are at home, he tries to get to the stadium earlier for weightlifting and conditioning drills.

But for Holland, the goal of making the major leagues is well worth the cold and the heat he has to endure. He wants to make his families proud as he displays his baseball skills that both family units helped him develop.

Danny Hirt '73 is a writer and photographer for the Fredericksburg Standard-Radio Post newspaper in Fredericksburg, Texas, where he's been employed for the past 10 years.



Kansas City Royals selection Greg Holland pauses on the field prior to a recent Northwest Arkansas Naturals game – just before being promoted to Omaha, Neb.



Mark DiFelice of the Milwaukee Brewers shows off the tools of his trade – barber shears and a baseball glove.





BRENT GREER

COREY MARTIN

ON DECK

Four Catamounts join the professional ranks after Major League draft day

By DANIEL HOOKER '01

Four Western Carolina Catamount baseball players taken in the 2009 Major League Baseball first-year player draft have signed with the MLB clubs and began reporting for summer training and rookie-league play in late June. Currently, WCU has two players in the majors, and nine playing at varying stages in the minor league system, including the four newest members.

Junior Nick Liles was taken in the seventh round of the '09 draft with the 207th pick by the San Francisco Giants, making him Western Carolina's highest draft pick since **Eric Johnson '04** was selected in the third round of the 1999 draft with the 107th overall pick. Liles, who began his career with Arizona League Giants of MLB's rookie ball, played second and third base and in the outfield during his time at WCU.

Junior left-handed pitcher Chris Masters was drafted in the 11th round with the 328th pick by the Atlanta Braves, becoming the fifth Catamount baseball player drafted by

Atlanta. Masters has signed and reported to camp, bypassing the lower rookie rung of the Gulf Coast Braves to join the upper-division rookie league squad in Danville, Va. He is joined on the Danville Braves by former SoCon competitors Matt Crim (left-handed pitcher from The Citadel) and Cory Harrilchak (outfielder from Elon).

After being selected in the 14th round with the 426th pick by the Arizona Diamondbacks, junior infielder Brent Greer reported to the Yakima (Wash.) Bears of the short-season Class A Northwest League. Greer is just the second Catamount player ever selected by the Arizona Diamondbacks, joining former WCU standout **Todd Buchanan '03**, who was taken in the 13th round of the 2003 draft. Greer was named Northwest League Hitter of the Week in early July after hitting his first four professional home runs – including three in one game – in a road game at Everett, Wash.



CHRIS MASTERS

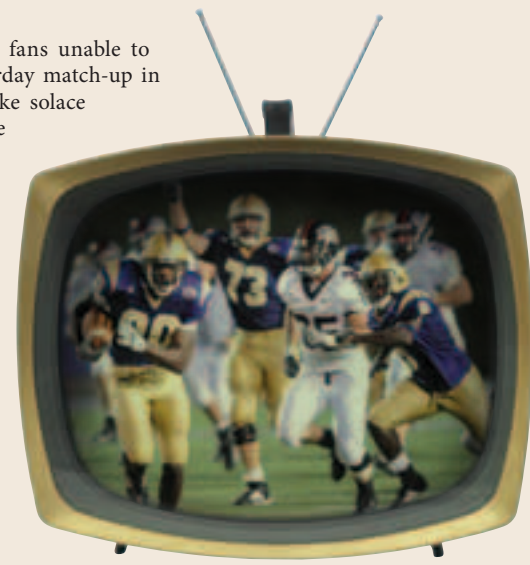
SCREEN PASS

Four football games are set to air on TV this season

Western Carolina football fans unable to make it to every single Saturday match-up in the upcoming season can take solace in the fact that four games are scheduled to be televised this year. The season-opening Sept. 5 road game at Vanderbilt will be broadcast by Comcast/Charter Sports Southeast at 6:30 p.m. Central Time (7:30 p.m. Eastern Time).

Three WCU home games are set for broadcast by the Asheville-based station WMYA (MY 40 Sports), beginning with the Mountain Heritage Day battle with Furman at 6 p.m. Sept. 26, followed by the Homecoming showdown pitting Western Carolina against the Citadel at 4 p.m. Oct. 17. Also on the WMYA fall programming schedule is the Catamounts' Oct. 24 contest against Wofford, when the Pride of the Mountains Marching Band will receive the Sudler Trophy, the Heisman Trophy of collegiate marching bands. Kickoff is set for 4 p.m.

All game times are tentative. Consult your local listings for details, or visit catamountsports.com for a complete look at the WCU fall sports schedule.



NICK LILES

The Catamounts selected in the recent Major League baseball draft are taking the first steps in a professional journey that they hope leads to the ultimate dream of any baseball player – making it to “the show.” WCU currently has two former Bat Cats who have advanced to play in the big leagues – pitchers **Mark DiFelice** of the Milwaukee Brewers and **Jared Burton** of the Cincinnati Reds. In addition, four Catamounts are active in baseball's minor leagues. Here's an update:

GREG HOLLAND – Selected in the 10th round (306th pick) by the Kansas City Royals in 2007, Holland was playing for the Royals' AA affiliate, the Northwest Arkansas Naturals of the Texas League before being promoted to the 3-A team in Omaha, Neb. (See related story on page 27.)

TYLER SEXTON – Drafted in the 31st round (926th pick) by the Baltimore Orioles in 2008, Sexton recently received his assignment to the Aberdeen (Md.) Ironbirds of the Class A Short-Season New York-Penn League.

JONATHAN GREENE – An eighth-round (260th) pick by the Texas Rangers in 2007, Greene is playing for the Bakersfield (Calif.) Blaze of the Class A-Advanced California League.

BLAKE MURPHY – Selected by the St. Louis Cardinals in the 42nd round (1,265th pick) in 2008, Murphy started out with the Batavia (N.Y.) Muckdogs low Class-A affiliate last season, advancing to open this season with the Quad City (Iowa) River Bandits single-A squad before being called up to the Palm Beach Cardinals of the Class A-Advanced Florida State League.

alumni ACHIEVEMENTS



The wreckage of Flight 1549 makes its way through the streets of New Jersey.

Photo by Richard J. McCormack

THE PLANE TRUTH

A WCU alumna shares her first-hand account of ‘The Miracle on the Hudson’

By SARAH KUCHARSKI

Passengers on US Airways Flight 1549 were chatting casually as the plane climbed on departure from New York City’s LaGuardia Airport bound for Charlotte on Thursday, Jan. 15, when, a minute and 2,800 feet into the air, something went wrong. “You felt the whole plane shake and heard a bang. It was pretty loud,” said passenger Bill Elkin. “Nobody knew at that point what had happened.”

No one in the cabin heard Capt. Chesley B. Sullenberger’s dispatch from the cockpit as the Airbus 320’s engines went silent. “Ah, this is, uh, Cactus 39. Hit birds. We lost thrust in both engines. We’re turning back towards LaGuardia,” Sullenberger radioed in.

On board was flight attendant **Sheila Dail ’73**, an Asheville native. Dail’s degree in early childhood education had landed her a teaching job in the Virgin Islands soon after graduation, which got her interested in travel. “It sounded like something that would be a good way to see different parts of the country and the world while not having the money,” Dail said.

She joined on with Northwest Airlines and was based out of Minneapolis. Wanting to return to North Carolina, she accepted a job with Piedmont based out of Wilmington and then joined US Airways in 1980, later moving to the Charlotte hub. Today she lives in Weaverville with her husband, Bill.

That day in January, Dail had been in service for four days and was looking forward to going home that evening after the plane touched down in Charlotte. When she heard a loud thump, her 29 years of experience told her that something had happened with Flight 1549, but initially she thought it was a routine mechanical problem. From where she was seated near the front of the plane, Dail expected nothing more than for the plane to head back to the tarmac.

A female passenger sitting next to Elkin looked out her window and cursed. “She said, ‘The engine just exploded, and there’s flames and smoke shooting out of it,’” Elkin said. Soon came the creeping realization that the plane was totally quiet. “The only noise that I heard was a child behind me crying a bit,” he said.

Sullenberger’s voice came over the plane’s loudspeaker: “Brace for impact.”

Dail and her fellow flight attendants immediately began yelling instructions to the plane’s 150 passengers. “We just kicked in to what we were trained to do,” Dail said.

“They just kept repeating it almost like a chant,” Elkin said.

Within seconds the plane slammed into the frigid Hudson River. “The next thing I remember is a hard hit and seeing water shooting past the windows,” Elkin said.

“I just thought, well that was a pretty hard landing,” Dail said. “I thought he must not have put the landing gear down.” None of the attendants knew that the plane had ditched in the river until they opened the emergency exits and water began filling the aisles. Dail and the other flight attendants called out for passengers to don their life vests as the plane’s life rafts automatically deployed. The water inside the plane quickly rose to knee level.

Passengers began making their way toward the front of the plane as the rear of the craft sank underwater. Dail helped passengers exit the plane. Her door refused to fully open, she thinks due to wind, forcing a passenger to help hold it open. Passengers crowded into the plane’s life rafts and stood on the wings of the plane clutching seat cushions to use as flotation devices and wearing bright yellow life vests. “When I realized that everyone was off the plane, I got off,” Dail said.

All 150 passengers aboard survived. The five-member crew had pulled off a heroic landing and escape. And Dail hopes that the successful splash landing teaches all airline passengers a lesson – safety saves.

“Passengers should pay attention to the safety information on each plane they board,” she said. “Every airplane is different. In the short time they’re doing the video, pay attention, give that your focus, and pull out the safety card and read it.”

The role of a flight attendant isn’t just to serve complimentary peanuts and soft drinks and help stow luggage. They are trained to be the plane’s first responders in emergency situations, and Dail is perfect for the job, friends say.

“Sheila’s presence just has a really calming influence,” said Josie Bewsey, a study abroad program student adviser at WCU and Dail’s friend of six years. “She’s a very strong woman.”

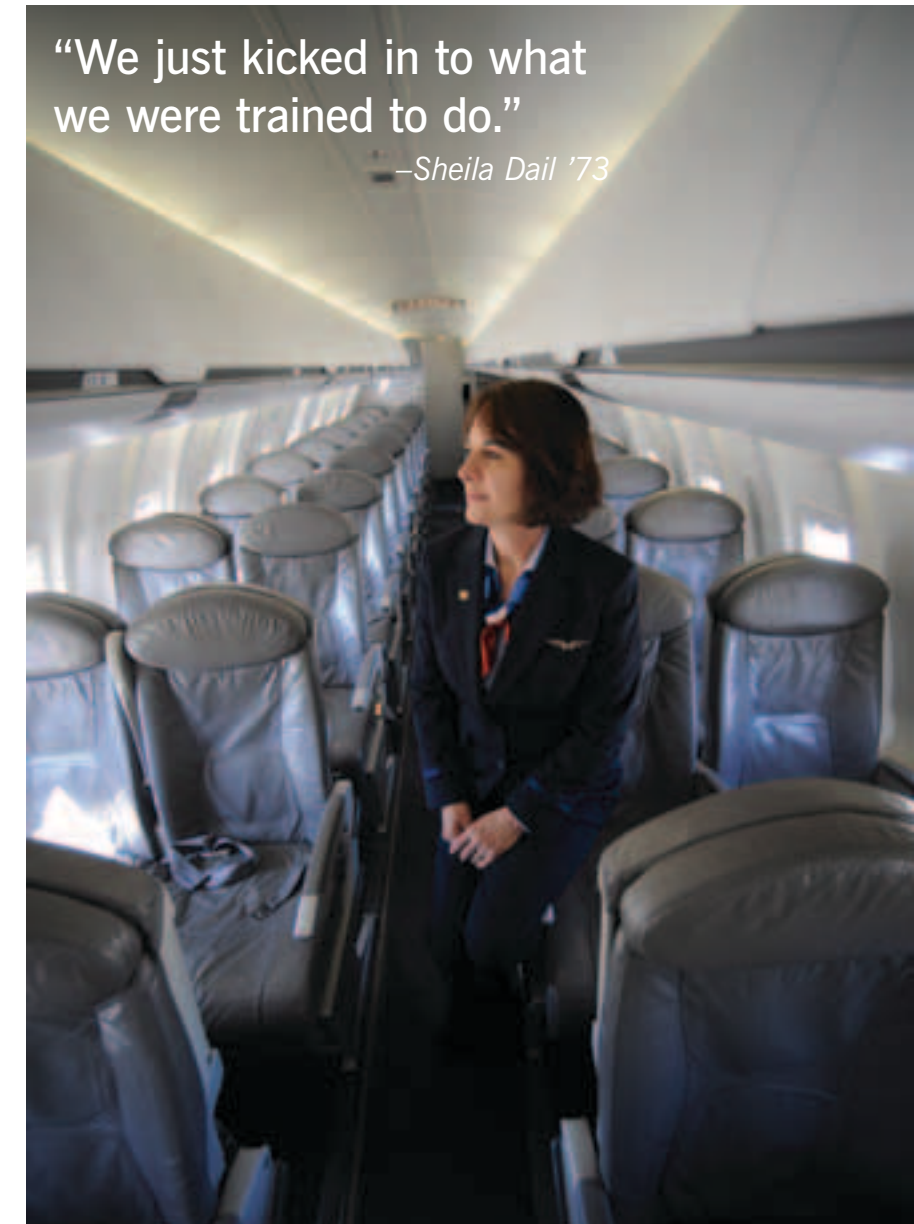
The crew of US Airways Flight 1549 made safety procedures part of their message as their heroism resulted in several public appearances in the weeks following the

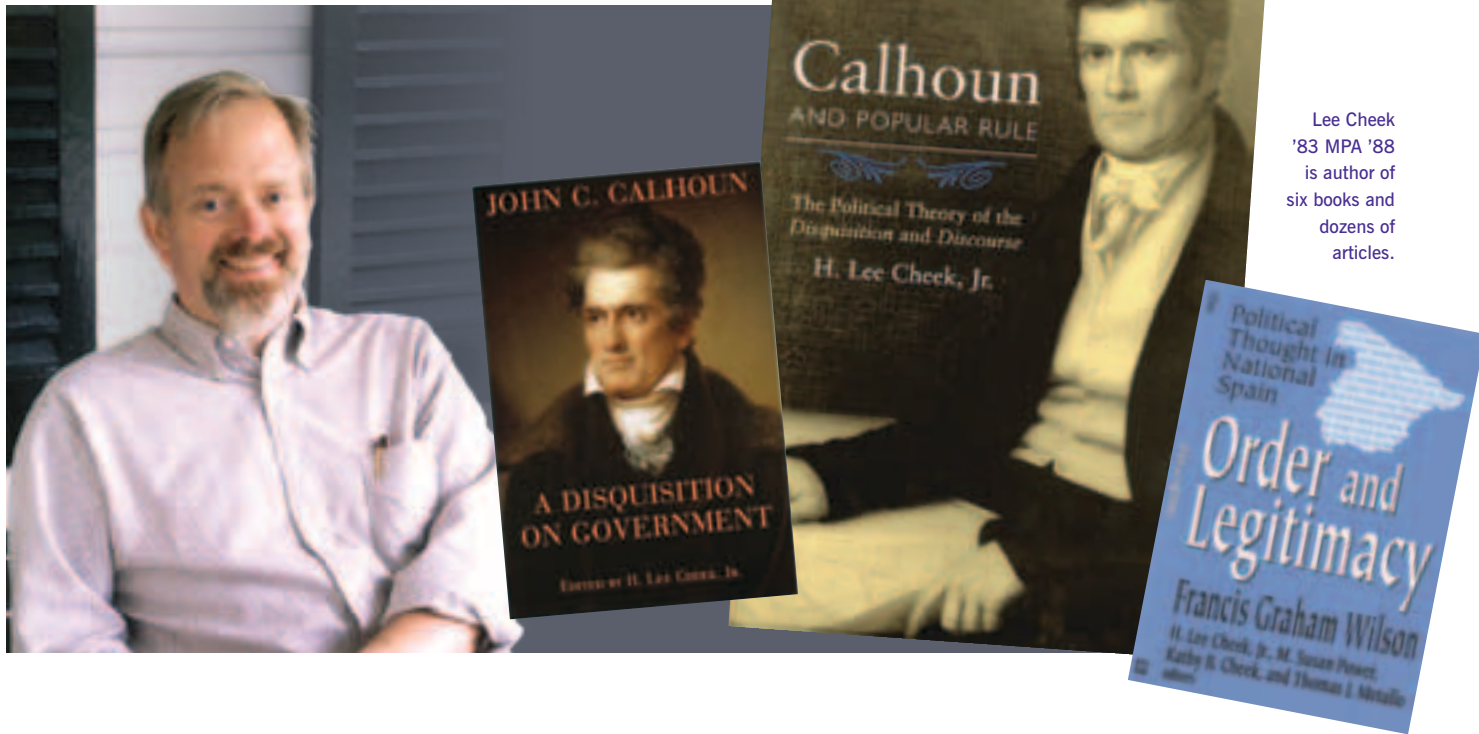
incident. Dail and her fellow crew members spent the first two days in debriefings with the National Transportation Safety Board. On Jan. 20, they were among those seated at President Barack Obama’s inauguration. The television interviews spanned from “Larry King Live” to CBS’s “Late Show with David Letterman” and “60 Minutes” to ABC’s “Good Morning America.” The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee took its testimony at a hearing on Capitol Hill. The crew was honored at award ceremonies with the mayors of New York and Charlotte and as guests of honor at Super Bowl XLIII, which Dail called “just the experience of a lifetime.”

Dail, set to resume work in September, will take to the air with a new sense of purpose. “I’m sure it’s going to change the way I think about things,” she said. “I’ll probably be more likely to say something when passengers are not following safety rules, such as not buckling up or walking through the cabin right before take off.” Dail also is developing a proposal for a critical incident response training program for flight attendants.

“We just kicked in to what we were trained to do.”

—Sheila Dail ’73





Lee Cheek '83 MPA '88 is author of six books and dozens of articles.

POLITICAL AMBITION

A lifelong passion for politics leads to a career as an award-winning professor

By TERESA KILLIAN

Classmates of **Lee Cheek '83 MPA '88** knew he was destined for a career in politics, and he was, although not in the way they might have expected. As an undergraduate, Cheek was vice president of the student body, organized a political science speaker series, helped charter WCU's chapter of Pi Gamma Mu International honor society and led numerous student political activist groups. He was such a charismatic, high-energy student leader that the 1982 April Fools' Day edition of the *Western Carolinian* joked Cheek had taken over campus in a coup. Cheek was and is known as a powerful public speaker, an enthusiastic self-starter and the kind of leader who inspires others to get involved. These qualities helped Cheek in jobs from congressional aide to church pastor, and led to a career that enabled him to marry lifelong interests in politics, religion and helping others.

Cheek is an award-winning political science professor and scholar at Brewton-Parker College in Mount Vernon, Ga. His publications have been described as groundbreaking and definitive, and scholars worldwide seek him for consultation. "From an early age, I was fascinated by politics because of its centrality to all decision-making," said Cheek, professor of political science and vice president for college advancement at Brewton-Parker. "Granted, the process is most imperfect, but my interest has always been on how to make the process better."

His first brush with politics was at age 4 when he noticed the commercials and shiny "Goldwater" buttons from the 1964 presidential race. A few years later, he joined his dad in distributing fliers and campaigning for a legislative

candidate. His participation increased in the regular conversations about political issues around the Cheek dinner table. By the time he enrolled at WCU, he knew he wanted to major in political science and history, and the quality and creativity of his work made an impression on his professors. "Even as an undergraduate, you could see his potential developing in academia," said Gordon Mercer, WCU professor of political science.

After earning his bachelor's degree from WCU, Cheek went on to graduate from Duke Divinity School and study at Christian Albrechts Universitat in Germany. He returned to WCU for a master's degree in public administration, then earned his doctorate in political theory from The Catholic University of America.

Cheek has authored what Don Livingston, another WCU professor, describes as an impressive quantity of high-quality published work – six books and dozens of articles on topics from Methodist history to the political philosophy of southern statesman John C. Calhoun. His accolades include winning the "Professor of the Year" award three times at Brewton-Parker and the 2008 Jordon Excellence in Teaching Award, the college's most prestigious teaching honor. He also recently received the WCU Alumni Association Academic and Professional Achievement Award – a recognition his classmates say is well-deserved. "Lee Cheek has always been a man of character who has selflessly dedicated himself to serving the betterment of society and individuals," said the retired Lt. Col. **Edward M. Levy '82**. "He has inspired his peers, students and all those around him."

HE'S HISTORY

A teacher returns to the classroom to pursue fellowship-supported studies

By JILL INGRAM MA '08

Threetimes proved the charm for **Evan Daniel Clapsaddle '02**, winner of a 2009 James Madison Fellowship, an award he tried for twice before without success.

The James Madison Fellowship is a national award and supports graduate study for teachers of secondary school American history, American government and social studies. Clapsaddle graduated with bachelor's degrees in history and social sciences education and now teaches 11th-grade U.S. history at Swain County High School. He plans to begin graduate studies in history at WCU in fall 2009. Clapsaddle is the first alumnus in the university's history to win the fellowship and the first fellowship winner to apply it toward study at Western Carolina.

"I'm so proud to choose Western Carolina's program over any others," Clapsaddle said. "The professors at WCU have gone out of their way to make this happen, and they have really inspired me to do something with my degree. I don't just teach history. I live it, and I love it."

Clapsaddle's was one of 55 fellowships awarded this year, each worth \$24,000. He and his wife, Annette Saunooke Clapsaddle, and their infant son live in Whittier. Clapsaddle has been at Swain High four years and also is an assistant football coach.

Elizabeth McRae MA '96, WCU associate professor of history and director of the social sciences education program, worked closely with Clapsaddle during his undergraduate years and calls him "an exceptional teacher." Along with providing him a letter of recommendation, she helped Clapsaddle fine-tune his winning application. "Evan could choose any university for this fellowship. It's a credit to us that he has chosen to do it here, and it's a credit to us that he is one of our undergraduates," McRae said. "It also points to the strength of our regional public schools that one of their teachers is a James Madison Fellow."

Swain High has an especially strong history program. **Billie Clemens MAEd '91** teaches 10th- and 11th-grade history at the school and also wrote Clapsaddle a recommendation. Clemens sits on the editorial board of the *Magazine of History*, a publication of the Organization of American Historians.

Brian Railsback, dean of the Honors College, is WCU's James Madison Fellowship representative and selected Clapsaddle for nomination several years ago after conferring with other faculty members. "Evan's name just kept coming up over and over again," Railsback said.

Clapsaddle had determined to stop applying if he failed again to secure a fellowship. This year's acceptance package sat unopened on Clapsaddle's desk at Swain High for a week before he discovered it. "I was trying to clean off the clutter, and there it was," he said.

Income from a U.S. Treasury trust fund, corporate contributions, private gifts and foundation grants fund the James Madison fellowships. A committee of professors and past fellows selects recipients, the number of which varies but roughly represents a winner from each of the 50 states.



Evan Clapsaddle '02 (right) worked with Elizabeth McRae MA '96, associate professor of history and director of the social sciences education program, on his winning application for a 2009 James Madison Fellowship.



CHILDHOOD FRIEND

South Carolina students find an advocate in a young after-school director

By JILL INGRAM MA '08

Amy Clifton '98 works nights and weekends building a photography business that documents weddings, new babies and other key moments in people's lives. But it's her day job that really consumes her. Clifton is the after-school programs director for Communities in Schools of Greenville in South Carolina. Part of a national nonprofit, the program helps students who need support with academics and behavioral and social skills to achieve success in school and life.

Clifton, of Greer, S.C., her hometown, has been with the organization since shortly after graduation from Western Carolina with a degree in psychology. She began as a case manager and then became a site coordinator, moving into the supervisory position in summer 2007. "Before I graduated, I described to my adviser what I wanted to be doing, but I didn't really have a name for it," Clifton said. When she began with Communities in Schools, she recalled, "It was a perfect fit."

As director, Clifton oversees five full-time employees and five after-school programs serving about 225 kindergartners through middle-school students in Greenville County. She also has the opportunity to continue working directly with the program's children; recently she taught a photography class to a group of middle-school girls.

Clifton's devotion to children is evident in her actions since joining Communities in Schools. She has achieved national training certification, developed a student behavior modification program, served on a school-improvement council, been active on many levels for a statewide after-school initiative and helped raise more than \$500,000 for Communities in Schools. In 2007, she won one of seven "Unsung Hero Awards," given by the national Communities in Schools organization only every five years.

Clifton's efforts did not go unnoticed at Western Carolina, either. In fall 2008, the WCU Alumni Association

presented Clifton, 33, with its Young Alumna Award. **Gwyn Goble Smith '70**, Clifton's seventh-grade language arts and literature teacher, nominated her for the award. The two remained close after Clifton passed through seventh grade; it was Smith who encouraged Clifton to visit Western Carolina when she was deciding on a college. "Amy had the same feeling that I had when I walked on campus. She looked around and knew she wanted to be there," Smith said.

Clifton's former adviser, WCU psychology professor Bruce Henderson, said Clifton was a model student. "She always knew what she was doing and what she wanted to do. She came in organized and was an excellent student – thoughtful and well-prepared," Henderson said.

An only child, Clifton comes from "a family of givers." Her father, the Rev. Larry Clifton, is a retired substance abuse counselor and retired Methodist minister who often worked with children and school youth groups. Her mother, Gail, works in Greenville County School's 4-K program.

His daughter has "always showed an interest in working with others," said Larry Clifton. "I guess it's something that she picked up by observation and conversations, hearing her mom and I talk about kids. Her mom and I both love kids, and we both gravitate to them."

Family and community are integral to Clifton's personal and job satisfaction. She is happy to be home and enjoys working in the community where she grew up; it's not unusual for her to encounter one of her mother's former students or the child of a former classmate. The helping fields can draw individuals with unhappy pasts who want to help others avoid unhappy futures. In Clifton's case, a happy past inspires her work. "I was very blessed to have a wonderful childhood and a wonderful, supportive family," she said. "It's important for me to be able to provide that for children who may not it."

Clifton plans to continue developing her photography business. She recently launched a new Web site and has studied with one of the premier wedding photographers in the world. She draws a parallel between her devotion to children and photography. "The goals are kind of the same," she said. "Helping people to appreciate the world around them and the moment that they're in."

"I was very blessed to have a wonderful childhood and a wonderful, supportive family. It's important for me to be able to provide that for children who may not have it."

– Amy Clifton '98



SUPER SUNDAY

Three Catamounts work behind the scenes at the NFL's biggest event

By JOHN KENYON

When the Pittsburgh Steelers narrowly defeated the Arizona Cardinals at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa, Fla., at Super Bowl XLIII, three Catamounts were there making sure that the audio was set up properly, and that everyone on the field and sidelines was safe.

Bill Clarke '78 ME '80, director of WCU's Ramsey Regional Activity Center, and his son Tyler Clarke, then a WCU sophomore, provided audio support for the various performances and ceremonies. **David Rayburn '68**, chief of the Florida Highway Patrol Auxiliary in Tampa Bay, supervised nine troopers providing security on the field during the game.

"We were responsible for anything that required sound, except for the stadium public address," said Clarke. "That included the pregame performances by Jennifer Hudson and Faith Hill, the halftime show with Bruce Springsteen and the postgame awards ceremony. It almost was to the point that it was a TV special with a football game thrown in."

Clarke's years of managing the Ramsey Center and the entertainment stages at the annual Bele Chere festival in Asheville helped prepare him for a project on the scale of the Super Bowl. "My associations, contacts and networking with different companies gave me the background, experience and knowledge to provide that sort of support system," he said.

Although Clarke has ample experience setting up large performance venues, he still felt the pressure of working in

front of such a large crowd. "When I walked out onto the field to do a setup, I would get butterflies even though I wasn't part of the game. It's quite the experience," he said.

While Clarke was ensuring that everything ran smoothly with Springsteen's audio, Rayburn was providing protection for the players, cheerleaders and media on the sidelines.

"I was on my feet for 11 ½ hours. That was tough," said Rayburn. "Our primary responsibility was to provide sideline security on the field during the game, which included checking field passes, apprehending trespassers and coordinating the evacuation of the field in the case of an emergency situation."

This was the third Super Bowl that Rayburn has worked during his 21 years of service in security for the Tampa Sports Authority. "I have missed only four Buccaneer games in that time," he said.

Rayburn and Clarke knew each other long before Super Sunday. "Bill and I are fraternity brothers, and I have known him since he was a freshman," said Rayburn. Clarke remembers working for the newsstand on campus that Rayburn once owned. "I was the store manager for him," said Clarke.

Both described their role at the Super Bowl as the experience of a lifetime and would gladly do it again. "I plan to go to Miami next year. I only hope that I get to see **Brad Hoover '00** and the Carolina Panthers," said Clarke.



Prowling the sidelines at Super Bowl XLIII are (from left) Bill Clarke '78 ME '80, David Rayburn '68 and Clarke's son, Tyler.



GOOD CHEER

A former dance team captain makes the Pro Bowl

By SUZANNE BARKLEY '09

When Waynesville native **Tara Mull '05** graduated from Western Carolina, she feared her days as a dance performer may be coming to an end. Mull was determined she wasn't finished performing, however, and in 2006 the former WCU dance team captain became a TopCat cheerleader for the NFL's Carolina Panthers. Having cheered the team on for the past three seasons, Mull was selected to represent the Panthers organization in the 2009 Pro Bowl in Honolulu. WCU's cheerleading coach, **Kim Cherry '01**, calls it the highest honor an NFL cheerleader can receive.

TopCat cheerleaders who take part in the Pro Bowl must have at least one year of experience and must be selected by a vote of their teammates to be their representative at the event. "It was an amazing honor to be chosen by my teammates and friends, whom I admire so much, to go and directly represent all that the TopCats are about," Mull said. "Being a part of the elite group for the Pro Bowl was a life-changing event."

To prepare for the event, Mull received a DVD of choreography and practiced moves she would be performing with cheerleaders from other NFL teams. "We had a few days to review and synchronize our individual styles before we went out to promote the big event as ambassadors of the NFL," Mull said. "The rest of the week was filled with performances, public speaking, and interacting with fans at military bases, children's hospitals, parks and a block party pep rally."

Mull taught at a youth cheerleading clinic for Japanese children as part of her Pro Bowl experience. "I feel so fortunate to have had that opportunity. It's one of the best things I have ever done. We knew going into the room that it

would be a bit of a challenge since the girls knew very little English, but they really did pick it up easily," said Mull. "It was a moving experience to see something be so successful regardless of such a language barrier. We spoke the international language of dance movement and smiles, and that's what got us through."

The former WCU social work major and dance teacher credits WCU for preparing her for her experiences as a TopCat and at the Pro Bowl. "Being a part of the Dance Team and dance program at WCU was an important stepping stone to becoming a TopCat, and I hope that encourages other girls to follow in my footsteps," said Mull. "Through my social work major at WCU, I was given many public speaking opportunities and was encouraged to get involved in our community, which was great preparation for my role as a TopCat. All of my experiences at WCU helped me grow into the person that I am today, and I hold the Catamounts very close to my heart as I proudly represent the Carolina Panthers TopCats."



Tara Mull '05 (left) joins other NFL cheerleaders (above) in Hawaii for the Pro Bowl. Photos by Daniel J. Kelliher



WE'RE REUNITED

Western Carolina alumni spanning the decades returned to campus over the summer to take part in the fourth annual Purple and Gold Reunion Series, sponsored by the WCU Alumni Association. At top from left, **Fannie Ashley Black '41** shares her memories of being the institution's first Homecoming queen in 1939; **Marvin Cole '58 MAEd '60** entertained classmates with his critically acclaimed one-man show "An Evening with Mark Twain"; and **June Wright Brown '49**, the first woman to earn an athletics letter at Western Carolina, shows off her varsity sweater. Plans already are under way for the 2010 summer reunions. For information, visit www.wcu-alumni.com.

classNOTES

1938

The Asheville chapter of the United Daughters of the Confederacy awarded membership in June to **Margaret Lane**, a daughter of Confederate veteran Preston Lane. Preston was 60 years old when he married Margaret's mother and died when Margaret was 10 years old. Margaret Lane attended WCU in 1937-38 and took graduate-level courses as late as 1965. She taught 43 years at Dana Elementary School and, 91 this year, lives in Hendersonville's Carolina Village.

1939

Born Jan. 27, 1909, **Samuel P. Hyatt MAEd '58** of Arden is Western Carolina's oldest living alumnus, according to available alumni records. Hyatt spent his career as an administrator at Cherokee High School, retiring in the 1960s, and earned both his degrees while working full time, said daughter Theresa Hyatt Cotton. "As far as I know, all of his education was at Western



Carolina," Cotten said. Hyatt began a teaching career before he turned 20, and met his wife, Mursetis Young Hyatt, when they both taught in one-room schoolhouses in Swain County. The couple had three children and were married for 75 years before Mursetis Hyatt died in 2007. Hyatt, who is in good health, now resides in an assisted-living home in Arden, but is originally of Jackson County's Shoal Creek community.

1968

Richard Shaw has qualified for membership in the 2008 Million Dollar Round Table, an association of financial professionals. Shaw, of Sumter, S.C., has represented Allstate insurance since 2002.

1969

Brian Bennett MAEd '72, a retired professor who spent 15 years in the natural resource conservation and management program, will soon celebrate 40 years of marriage to his wife, Margaret Splawn Bennett, who is retired from Haywood County Schools.

Leslie "Les" G. Robinson MAEd is a member of the Grinalds Group, higher education consultants in the area of leadership development and based in Charleston, S.C. Robinson has long involvement in college athletics programs and was an assistant coach on the WCU basketball team while earning his degree. He is a former men's basketball coach at The Citadel (where he retired in 2008 as director of athletics), East Tennessee State University and N.C. State.

1971

The late retired **Lt. Col. Harry Joe Rhinehart MA '72** published a novel, based on his combat experience in Vietnam, titled "The Iron Triangle" just before his May 2008 death.

1972

Ted Luckadoo, former Catamount running back, was head football coach for the South Carolina team in the 72nd annual Shrine Bowl of the Carolinas last December at Wofford College in Spartanburg. South Carolina defeated North Carolina 24-16. Luckadoo has a nearly four-decade coaching career, with 25 years at Westside High School in Anderson, S.C., where he is head football coach and athletic director.

Dorothy Dendy Smith MAEd '02, **Jill Fisher DeMarco MS '90 MAT '07** and Martha Worley have authored a book titled "Literacy Beyond Picture Books," published in June by Corwin Press. The textbook focuses on teaching secondary students with moderate to severe disabilities. Smith and DeMarco work in special education with Buncombe County Schools. Karena Cooper-Duffy, an assistant professor of special education in WCU's department of human services, wrote the book's foreword.

1973

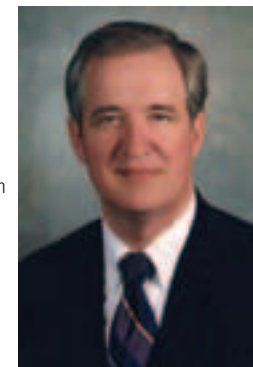
Dot Reid Case MAEd was named Henderson County Public Schools 2009-10 teacher of the year, receiving a plaque and \$1,000 from SunTrust Bank during a May ceremony. A Henderson County native, Case has taught in the county for 40 years, including teaching history at North Henderson for the past 15 years.

1975

Jon Wiggins MIE '76 has just completed 31 years as a professor at Missouri State University, in Springfield, Mo., where he has taught classes in construction management and technology, and agriculture teacher education. His wife, **Kenna Wike Wiggins '73**, a native of Waynesville, is a reading specialist with the Springfield school system. The couple have two grown daughters.

1981

Jeff Gray of Raleigh is the 2009 recipient of the Outstanding Government and Public Sector Attorney Award from the N.C. Bar Association. The award honors North Carolina's governmental and public sector attorneys for excellence, dedication and passion for justice. Gray served in the N.C. Attorney General's Office for more than a decade and currently manages the Raleigh office of Rose Rand Wallace Attorneys P.A. He received his law degree from Campbell University in 1985.



LESSON LEARNED

WCU steered generations on a mission of helping others

By JILL INGRAM MA '08

Dana Tucker '88 MSW '09 spent two years working full time and taking night classes to complete her master's degree, an immensely rewarding experience in itself. During a department of social work graduation ceremony in May, Tucker enjoyed the additional reward of having her great-aunt, **Jimmie Tucker Sutton '49** – a woman Tucker calls "her hero" – place the ceremonial hood around her neck and shoulders.

She and her great-aunt, a relative on Tucker's father's side, share a love of education, and both have a "huge heart for children and people," Tucker said. The women also have deep roots in Western North Carolina. Tucker originally is of Jackson County's Pine Creek community and currently lives in Sylva, as does Sutton, now a resident of Morning Star Assisted Living. They each focused their careers on improving the lives of area residents.

Tucker, a social worker at Fairview School, earned her master's degree to better serve the children and families with whom she works. "Often, people in rural areas have to make do, and I want to be the best I can be for them," she said.

Sutton attended the university when it still was Western Carolina Teachers College, earning a diploma in 1930 and then a bachelor's degree in education. She went on to spend more than 40 years teaching in WNC public schools, including those in Jackson, Macon, Haywood and Graham counties. Her first job was teaching in a one-room schoolhouse up Cullowhee's Cane Creek Road, on weekends walking and hitching to her family's home (close to what is now WCU's Hennon Stadium and Childress baseball field). Later, she grew to love teaching the primary grades.

Sutton will turn 100 in November. She and Tucker, 43, have been close for – from Tucker's perspective – what seems like a long time. Recently, Tucker said to her great-aunt, "Aunt Jimmie, we've been friends for 26 years." Sutton turned to her great-niece and said, "That's not long, is it?"

Sutton never stopped learning, continuing to take university and community college courses after graduation. She often contributed toward the tuition expenses of others who expressed a desire for education, Tucker said.

"She's a phenomenal lady," Tucker said. "I will never measure up to what she does, but she's a wonderful mentor, so I'm trying."



Dana Tucker '88 MSW '09 (left) hugs great-aunt Jimmie Tucker Sutton '49 at a social work department ceremony.

HISTORICAL RECORD

Master's program graduates go three for three in book publishing

By JILL INGRAM MA '08

Research that three Western Carolina alumni started as students in the history department's graduate program developed into three recently published books.

Kevin T. Barksdale MA '99 authored "The Lost State of Franklin: America's First Secession," published by the University Press of Kentucky. Barksdale is an assistant professor at Marshall University.

Chris Manganiello MA '03 co-edited with Paul Sutter "Environmental History and the American South: A Reader," published by the University of Georgia Press. Manganiello is a research fellow at the Smithsonian Institution.

Bruce E. Stewart MA '01 edited "King of the Moonshiners: Lewis R. Redmond in Fact and Fiction," published by the University of Tennessee Press. Stewart is an assistant professor at Appalachian State University.

"This indicates the high level of work that our graduate students are doing and reinforces the quality of the training they received at WCU," said **Richard Starnes '92 MA '94**, head of the history department.

Starnes himself recently received an honor. In fall 2008, he was appointed to the North Carolina Historical Commission, which establishes criteria for state historic properties, approves state archives and museum collection policies, reviews state museum exhibit plans, and acts as a resource for legislative committees considering historical or historic preservation issues.

"History remains a powerful force in our society, and I look forward to contributing to how our state preserves, commemorates and remembers our past," said Starnes, who specializes in Southern social and economic history. Starnes is writing a book about William Alexander Graham, who served as a U.S. senator, North Carolina governor and U.S. secretary of the Navy in the 19th century.



1982

Edward M. Levy, a native New Yorker and expert in corporate security, in April became director of security for the Empire State Building, which stands 1,454 feet tall in midtown Manhattan.

1984

Monica Henson Bomengen of Highlands is director of education services for the East Coast operations of New Education for the Workplace Inc., which operates Schools for Integrated Academics and Technologies charter high schools. Bomengen, a native of Hayesville, was editor of the Western Carolinian and also was the first recipient of the J.W. and Patricia Palmer Scholarship for students from Clay County. Her son, Brook, is a WCU history major, the fifth generation of the family to receive higher education in Cullowhee.



1985

Judge **Mark D. Martin** has completed his 10th year of service as a member of the N.C. Supreme Court. He authored in March an opinion for the court he hopes proves "very beneficial to people who practice in or come in contact with our appellate courts." In 2008, Martin served as program chair at the Appellate Judges Education Institute annual meeting, held in Phoenix, where Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor gave the remarks during a banquet dinner. He continues his work as a commission member of the World Justice Project and was co-chair of the American Bar Association's summit on fair and impartial state courts in May. Martin also teaches courses in the law schools of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and North Carolina Central University.

Amy K. Smith was named among the "legal elite" in the January issue of Business North Carolina. Inclusion in the annual list is based on the results of ballots distributed to more than 16,000 attorneys in the state. Smith specializes in tax and estate law with the law firm of Bell, Davis & Pitt, with offices in Charlotte and Winston-Salem.

1986

Willa Hamrick has worked in radio for 22 years under the on-air name Catherine Lane. Now on WSOC-FM in Charlotte, Hamrick is Charlotte's first female to solo host both a morning and afternoon drive show. She recently received a nomination from the Country Music Association for major market radio personality of the year.

Myron McGhee won first place in the National Archives Excellence in Genealogy Awards essay contest. His essay, titled "The Use of National Archives Holdings for Genealogical Research," traced his family's ancestry using federal, state and local government records. McGhee, of Decatur, Ga., is a graduate student at Valdosta State University and a circulation specialist with the Pitts Theology Library at Emory University.

1987



Lisa T. Briggs MPA '89, WCU assistant professor of criminology and criminal justice, recently received the university's College of Health and Human Sciences' Faculty Student Engagement Award. "This award means a great deal to me because it is a direct reflection on how much our criminology and criminal justice students give back to their communities," Briggs said. Briggs joined WCU in 2002 and lives in Cullowhee. Earlier this year, Briggs received a Chancellor's Meritorious Award for Engaged Teaching.



Tony Johnson, an Edward Jones financial adviser in Orlando, Fla., since 1999, has been named a principal with the firm's holding company, Jones Financial Cos. LLLP. Johnson was one of 25 individuals chosen from more than 36,000 associates across the globe to join the firm's 310 principals.

1988

Alfred E. Blount celebrated 10 years of service as pastor of Tried Stone Missionary Baptist Church in Asheville. He is married to Regina McDaniel Blount.



Phil McManus MBA '91, an associate professor and head of the culinary arts program at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College, was named 2008-09 Educator of the Year by the Allegheny Highlands Chamber of Commerce. McManus also is a member of WCU's Alumni Association board of directors.

GOOD RECEPTION

A Cullowhee couple keeps it local with a University Center wedding

By JILL INGRAM MA '08

Meagan Yops '03 MBA '04 and **Onifer Wilmoth '03 MBA '07** met as graduate students at Western Carolina. After they fell in love and decided to marry, an on-campus reception seemed the obvious choice.

"We both love Western," said Meagan, who took her husband's last name. "We still go to all the home football games and try to go to the home basketball games and sit in the outfield of the home baseball games."

The couple, who live in Cullowhee, reserved the Grandroom in the A.K. Hinds University Center for their event. "There's really no place else in Cullowhee to have the reception," Meagan Wilmoth said. "There's not a big hotel, and I'd much rather give my money to Western than a hotel."

Meagan, a title and inventory administrator at Andy Shaw Ford, is originally from Waynesville. Onifer, of Elkin, is fitness director at Highlands Falls Country Club. The couple married on an October afternoon at their church, Cullowhee Baptist, also on campus and next to Hunter Library. After the ceremony, the couple and their guests enjoyed the walk to the University Center, receiving congratulatory honks and waves from students along the way.

Jill Lindsay, the U.C. information and reservation coordinator, said wedding receptions at the U.C. are becoming more common. "We've got at least one or two a year here lately," Lindsay said. Alumni, faculty, staff and students are eligible to reserve rooms for such events in the U.C., with Lindsay recommending booking at least six months in advance.

The Grandroom, with its bank of tall windows and a capacity of 500 people, costs a baseline \$300 for five hours, with additional charges for services and equipment, such as tables, chairs, greenery and sound. Aramark, the company that contracts with the university for food service, provides catering, with china service typically costing between

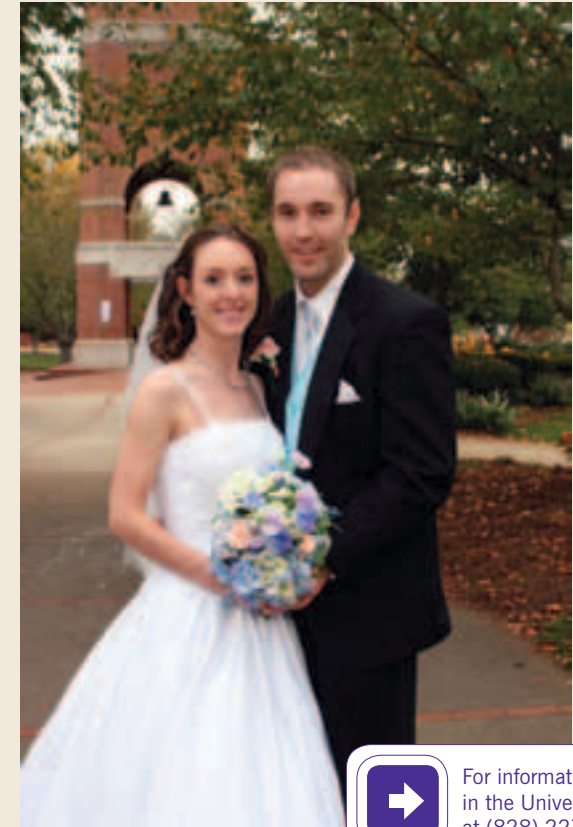


Photo courtesy of Style Street Photography

➔ For information about reserving a space in the University Center, contact Lindsay at (828) 227-7206 or lindsay@wcu.edu.

\$10 and \$20 per plate and hors d'oeuvres about \$1 apiece. Aramark also provides the wedding cake, with some exceptions; for instance, a relative made the Wilmoths' cake.

Planning the reception was simple and easy, Meagan Wilmoth said, and many of the more than 100 guests went out of their way to say how much they enjoyed it. "Everyone was very impressed with the wait staff at the U.C. and with how beautiful everything looked," she said. "I have no complaints. Everybody said they had a great time."

1989

Richard F. Shoestock Jr., a computer systems administrator at Smoky Mountain Center in Sylva, has been working toward the organization's automation goals. Working in 15 Western North Carolina counties, Smoky Mountain Center coordinates prevention, treatment and support services for individuals and families with developmental disabilities, and mental health or substance abuse issues. Shoestock created a scheduler, a "to do" list that reduces incomplete data, and electronic timesheets accessible to employees throughout the region.

1990

The governor of Kentucky recently appointed **Danette Morton MS** to a four-year term on the Kentucky Board of Examiners of Psychology.

1991

George Brosi MAEd is editor of Appalachian Heritage, the literary magazine of Berea College in Kentucky.

J. Eric Powell earned a doctorate in educational psychology from the University of Tennessee at Knoxville in December. His research focused on training public safety personnel to respond to terrorism incidents. Powell is a program director with the Division of Public Safety at Walters State Community College in Morristown, Tenn., and teaches state and local EMS, fire service and law enforcement personnel. In addition to numerous professionally related volunteer pursuits, Powell is past president of the WCU Alumni Association board of directors.

Jeff Reece is chief executive officer for Marlboro Park Hospital in Bennettsville, S.C.

Mickey Renner joined Wachovia's South Carolina team as statewide area business banking manager. Renner joined Wachovia in 1991 and is responsible for business banking strategy and performance and leads teams around the state. He and his wife, **Angela Harrison Renner '93**, and their two children live in Columbia, S.C.

1992

James Michael Baldwin MS '98, a product applications engineer with Tyco Electronics Corp. in Fairview, presented a paper at the Society of Automotive Engineers (more commonly known as SAE) Power Systems conference in November in Bellevue, Wash. The paper, titled "Inductive Load Switching Suppression Methods: Increasing Military and Aerospace Applications Reliability," was selected as one of 10 for journal publication; best oral presentation in its category; and most outstanding technical paper.

1993

Deborah M. Mullen, a doctoral candidate in health services policy and administration at the University of Minnesota, was named a 2008 Juran Fellow by the Joseph M. Juran Center for Leadership in Quality. Mullen is finishing her dissertation on patient safety issues in outpatient medical clinics.

Caron Bishop, a native of Rutherford County, is managing director for Chautauqua Opera and lives in New York with her husband, Julian Moreno, and their son, Luke.

1994

Joe Price MA is librarian at the Louisville, Ky., campus of the Galen College of Nursing. He and his wife, Christine, have three sons.

NEW LUNCHEON SERIES WILL HIGHLIGHT WCU'S PEOPLE AND PROGRAMS

A new luncheon series being launched this fall by Western Carolina is designed to give alumni and friends in the Asheville and Hendersonville areas an opportunity to hear about the latest developments at the university – straight from the people who are directly involved.

The Greater Asheville Luncheon Series will be held at the new Asheville Hilton Biltmore Park on the third Wednesday of every month beginning in September. The venue was specifically selected to allow alumni from both the Asheville and Hendersonville areas to attend, said **Marty Ramsey '85**, director of alumni affairs.

"We have more than 6,000 WCU alumni in the greater Asheville area, easily our highest concentration of alumni," Ramsey said. "It is important that we connect and reconnect with our alumni and friends there, and share with them information about the many exciting things that are happening at Western Carolina."

Each event in the series will highlight a college, program or initiative. Deans, faculty, staff and students will be the primary presenters at each luncheon, which will begin at 11:45 a.m. with a gathering and reception, followed at noon with a buffet lunch. Programs will begin at 12:15 p.m. and adjourn at 12:45 p.m. Lunch cost is \$10.50.

The opening program on Sept. 16 will showcase the university's Graduate School and Research programs and the College of Arts and Sciences by highlighting a pair of environmentally themed initiatives – the Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines, presented by director Rob Young, and the Highlands Biological Station, presented by director Jim Costa.

The second program, slated for Oct. 21, will feature the university's Honors College in a program titled "The Honors Path: Developing Intellectual Talent for U.S. Success in a 'Flat World.'" It will be led by Brian Railsback, dean of the Honors College.

The schedule for the remainder of the year has presentations by the College of Health and Human Sciences on Nov. 18; College of Arts and Sciences, Jan. 20; College of Business, Feb. 17; Kimmel School of Construction Management and Technology, March 17; department of athletics, April 21; Mountain Heritage Center, May 19; and College of Education and Allied Professions, June 16. No series events are planned for December, June or August.

The series is sponsored by Dixon-Hughes, PLLC; the Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines; and the Asheville Hilton Biltmore Park.



For more information, visit www.wcu-alumni.com or contact Marty Ramsey at (828) 227-7335, toll-free at (877) 440-9990 or via e-mail at mramsey@wcu.edu.

1996

Jason Hatfield has been involved in more than 40 theatrical productions since moving to Wilmington in 1997. He worked with the late Pat Hingle and Frank Capra Jr. and played Linda Lavin's son in "Driving Miss Daisy," the longest-running show in Wilmington's history. Hatfield has done voice acting for several Japanese animation and live-action films and has twice acted during training exercises with U.S. Marine Special Operations Command. "It is one of my proudest moments, and one of my more surprising, never having actually thought I could use acting abilities to serve my country," Hatfield said.

1997

Natalie Mathis Norman MS '99 was named Macon County teacher of the year for 2009 and Macon County teacher of excellence for the exceptional children's program. She is married to Greg Norman and has two children.

BB&T promoted **Steve Eng MS '99**, who works in BB&T's business loan administration department in Winston-Salem, to vice president. Eng and his wife, **Amber Wendelin Eng '98**, have been married five years.

1999

Gov. Bev Perdue appointed **Marsha Ball Hicks** of Cherokee to the Governor's Western Residence board of directors.

2000

Todd Delp MAEd '04 is assistant dean of students at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. A newlywed and member of the Navy Reserve, Delp was scheduled to return from Iraq after his tour there ended in spring.

Paula Wood Tate recently received the teacher of the year honor at the newly opened Draughn High School in Burke County. She lives with her husband, Justin, and their two sons in Morganton.

2001

Matthew Lawing MBA '05 of Maiden received a master of divinity degree from Emory University's Candler School of Theology in May. He is a member of Boger City United Methodist Church in Lincolnton.

Entrepreneur magazine named **Heidi Smith Price's** construction company, Spartan Constructors LLC, the No. 1 fastest-growing women-led company in its November issue. Price bought majority partnership of the industrial construction company, based in Sugar Hill, Ga., in 2004 and immediately certified it as a Women's Business Enterprise, which expanded its contracting opportunities. The company's 2007 sales were \$136 million. In an interview with the magazine, Price said earning respect from peers in the male-dominated industry was a challenge. "You just have to stand your ground and not let other people walk all over you," she said.

2002

Natalie Sipe Campbell MS '04, a speech-language pathologist in Hickory, and her husband, Tate, welcomed the birth of Elizabeth Joyce Campbell, their second daughter, in December.

Dan Foley opened Foley Performance in Christiansburg, Va. His fitness center is geared toward developing programs tailored to individual client needs. "Our philosophy is to give our clients every tool they need to achieve whatever their goals are," Foley said in a newspaper interview. Foley evaluates clients by investigating connections between an individual's body and his or her chemical, physical and lifestyle factors.

DIRECTORY INFORMATION

WCU Alumni Association begins work on 2010 edition of registry

Plans are under way for the 2010 edition of the Western Carolina University Alumni Directory, and representatives of the Harris publishing company soon will be contacting WCU alumni seeking updated information for the popular resource book.

"The directory will enable alumni to reconnect with their classmates, locate fellow alumni who live within their own communities and keep up-to-date with some of the latest happenings at their alma mater," said **Marty Ramsey '85**, alumni affairs director. "When the folks from Harris get in touch – by mail, by phone or by e-mail – we strongly encourage all alumni to take the time to respond so that the 2010 directory is as complete and useful as possible."

A questionnaire is scheduled to go online in October, followed by home mailings to more than 40,000 alumni, and phone calls in December. In past directories, alumni have shared information that includes e-mail address, mailing address, degrees held, job and family. Listings have been presented alphabetically and by class year, geographical residence and career.

"When I was contacted for information concerning the last edition, it got me reminiscing about my time on campus and brought back many memories," said **David Andrew '83**,

president of the WCU Alumni Association. "I am looking forward to this new directory to be able to keep in touch with old and new friends I have made while in service to the university."

Andrew said the comprehensive directory also will be a great accessory to, and could help invite participation in, online communities such as WCU's controlled-access alumni network, which can be accessed from the alumni Web site at www.wcu-alumni.com.

Betty Allen '68, president-elect of the Alumni Association, said the directories have been especially useful for reaching out to reconnect with sorority sisters and planning events for Western Carolina alumni in her home community in Lincoln County. "The directories have been great to look up friends that I didn't keep as close touch with and didn't know where they are now," said Allen. "It has really been worth the money to me over the years."

The most recent alumni directory was published in 2000. The new directory is set for delivery in June 2010. For more information about the directory project, contact the Office of Alumni Affairs toll-free at (877) 440-9990 or e-mail mramsey@wcu.edu.

2004

Ecological Land Clearing, a business owned by geologist and conservationist **Luke W. Garland**, recently received attention in the trade magazine *Dixie Contractor*. Garland, based in Macon, Ga., launched his environmentally friendly land-clearing business about five years ago. "Our new land-clearing method is setting a higher standard for low-impact vegetation management," Garland said in the article. Garland's goal is a landscape hospitable to wildlife and vegetation that serves the landowner's needs.

Alyson Moyer Ward, who cheered at WCU from 2000 to 2004, is an account executive with DataFlux for its Southeast and Mid-Atlantic regions. In 2006, she married **Daniel Ward '03**, who works for Professional Builders Supply in Morrisville as an account coordinator.

2005

Mary Elizabeth Adams-Vassey graduated from East Carolina University in December with a master's degree in criminal justice. In April, she accepted the position of college liaison for high school programs at Isothermal Community College. Her husband, Phillip Aaron Vassey, who also received his master's degree

in criminal justice from ECU, recently accepted the distance learning advisement coordinator position in WCU's department of criminology and criminal justice. He also will serve as an adjunct professor. They have a daughter and live in Rutherfordton.

2007

Kyle McCurry is program director at classic rock station WNGZ-FM in upstate Elmira, N.Y. Since arriving in Elmira, McCurry has served as announcer during the Elmira College women's and men's lacrosse and basketball games and hosted a sports show on WNGZ called "Elmira College Corner." Elmira College athletics recently recognized McCurry for his support. "Elmira is a purple and gold school too," McCurry said. Before taking his new position, McCurry, formerly of Weaverville, hosted the midday shift and served as station manager at WWCU-FM, WCU's student-run radio station.

An essay by **Jennifer Veilleux MA '08** won first place in creative nonfiction at the annual convention of the Sigma Tau Delta International English Honor Society in March in Minneapolis. The essay, which carried a \$500 prize, was titled "Becoming My Mother" and was about eye surgery that Veilleux's mother underwent. Veilleux wrote the piece while she was a student in a nonfiction writing class with Deidre Elliott, an associate professor in the English department. Veilleux also presented a critical essay about Jane Eyre. It was the second year running that two of her essays were accepted for presentation at the convention.

2008

Fiona Ferron MAEd, a teacher at St. Aloysius Primary, earned an award for most outstanding teacher in her region (one of six) from the Ministry of Education and LASCO, a group of companies involved in manufacturing, packaging and distribution of food, beverages, personal care items, household products and pharmaceuticals. Ferron, honored during a ceremony held in Kingston, Jamaica, also was a candidate for overall teacher of the year.



Chris Wofford (second from right, with co-workers) was hired recently as event coordinator at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca, a venue in Salinas, Calif., that hosts car and motorcycle racing events. Wofford's responsibilities include managing aspects of food operations and acting as a contact for caterers and vendors. Wofford, who majored in sport management with a concentration in event and facility management, interned at the track from August to October without pay, supporting himself with money he had saved and riding a bicycle to and from work each day. When his internship ended, Wofford was offered a full-time position. "Without hesitation, I knew it was something I wanted to do," said Wofford, who had followed the track "for a long time." Wofford, formerly of Cullowhee, is the son of Sandra Patterson, an Aramark employee and a supervisor at the Starbucks in the Courtyard Dining Hall.

ALUMNI DEATHS

- Don C. Baucom II '89**, April 23; Mooresville.
- Adam Corey Becker '04**, March 20; Walhalla, S.C.
- Charles B. Black Jr. '60**, March 6; Charlotte.
- William J. Briggs MAEd '66**, April 4; Savannah, Ga.
- Mary Strain Byrd '39**, May 12; Franklin.
- Nita Louise Davis Cahours '76**, May 1; Raleigh.
- Carolyn Stillwell Harwood '42**, May 7; Charlotte.
- Anna Mae Dunlap Hendrix '46**, May 7; Charlotte.
- Irene P. James '65, May 2**; Highlands.
- Herbert Ray Klutzz '57**, May 25; Mooresville.
- Christopher Andrew Lever '08**, April 20; Weddington.
- James Thomas Medvec MAT '00**, June 10; Waynesville.
- Emily Palmer Nesbitt '37**, May 7; Mills River.
- Marvin A. Nockow MA '54**, May 29; Asheville.
- Timothy Harold Parris '89**, Jan. 19; Franklinville.
- David Edward Perkins**, July 25; High Point.
- Frank Ernest Plemmons '58**, May 12; Charlotte.
- Keith A. Robinson '82 MAEd '83**, Oct. 5; Norcross, Ga.
- Robert Martin Staley '94**, April 18; Mocksville.

UNIVERSITY DEATHS

- Elsie Earp Brown, supporter of the university and wife of the late Frank H. Brown Jr., acting president in 1972 and acting chancellor in 1974, March 27; Raleigh.
- Donald C. Gladieux, university friend and benefactor, June 5; Hendersonville.
- Claude N. Holland, former employee at Dodson Cafeteria, May 14; Sylva.
- Dixie Loraine Dowis McGinty, professor in the department of educational leadership and foundations, and instrumental in starting WCU's doctoral program in educational leadership, March 25; Sylva.
- Earl R. Young, former adjunct professor in the department of social work, May 2; Gainesville, Fla.

A LOSS FOR WORDS

Popular columnist Bob Terrell dies

Bob Terrell '51, a Sylva native and beloved regional writer, died May 31 in Arizona, where he had moved weeks earlier to be closer to family.

Terrell, who was 80, wrote about Western North Carolina people, places and happenings for more than 60 years. He authored more than 75 books – many on the shelves in WCU's Hunter Library – on a range of topics, including sports. Baseball in particular was his passion.

Terrell began his career in 1945 at the Sylva Herald. While a student at Western Carolina (then called Western Carolina Teacher's College), Terrell served as sports editor both for the Western Carolinian student newspaper and the yearbook.

In 1949, while still a student at WCU, Terrell began working as a sports reporter for the Asheville Citizen (it later merged with the city's other daily to become the Asheville Citizen-Times). "He would go to school, then get on the bus, be at the newspaper at 4 p.m., stay until the paper was out, get home by 3, and be up at 8 a.m. and do it all again," his son Bob Terrell Jr. said in a newspaper interview. Terrell became the Citizen's sports editor in 1956, and in 1967 launched the human interest column for which he was best known.

Steve White '67, WCU sports historian and retired sports information director, began reading Terrell as a child in the 1950s. "As much as anything else, I became a Catamount fan ... from reading Bob, because he covered everything that Western did," said White, who later came to know Terrell personally and considered him a mentor.

Terrell helped shape WNC sports. He worked behind the scenes to bring Minor League Baseball's Tourists back to Asheville in the late 1950s. In the early 1960s, Terrell persuaded Catamount basketball coach **Jim Gudger '48** to consider recruiting **Henry Logan**, a player from



Asheville. With the blessing of WCU officials, Gudger did recruit Logan, who became the first black athlete in the Southeast to play intercollegiate athletics at a predominately white institution.

"Bob always treated us like we were human beings," Logan said in a newspaper interview. "He treated us like basketball players. He didn't see any color."

Terrell's experiences included witnessing atomic bomb detonations while serving in the Army in the 1950s; a close association with the Rev. Billy Graham; and travel to 35 countries, including dozens of trips to the Holy Land. He requested his ashes be scattered in both Israel and Jackson County.

Beloved author Bob Terrell '51, a Sylva native, died in May. Photo courtesy the Asheville Citizen-Times.

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- Did you just land that new job?
- Have you received an award?

We want to know about it.

To update your personal information, change your address or add a classnote, drop us a line at:
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or visit www.wcu-alumni.com.

Please send story ideas and suggestions to:
The Magazine of Western Carolina University
Suite 420, H.F. Robinson Building
Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, N.C. 28723
or via e-mail: bstudenc@wcu.edu

eventsCALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2009

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

Ceremonial groundbreaking – For a 160,000-square-foot facility to house the College of Health and Human Sciences, the first of WCU's Millennial Initiative buildings. 1 p.m. Little Savannah Road, across N.C. Highway 107 from the main campus. RSVP by Aug. 21. (828) 227-2293



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 12

Catamount football home opener – vs. Gardner-Webb. 6 p.m. E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7338

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Greater Asheville Luncheon Series – Featuring the Highlands Biological Station and Program for the Study of Developed Shorelines. Reservations required. 11:45 a.m. Hilton Asheville, Biltmore Park, Asheville. (877) 440-9990

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

T.S. Monk and Rachael Price – Jazz performance. Part of the Lectures, Concerts and Exhibitions Series. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

Appal Shop - Appalachian Culture Seminar. 7:30 p.m. Part of the Lectures, Concerts and Exhibitions Series. Mountain Heritage Center. (828) 227-7129

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

Barrage – Fiddle-fest featuring eclectic mix of music, song and dance. Part of the Galaxy of Stars Series. 3 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479



WEDNESDAY-SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 23-27

“Manuscript” – A contemporary thriller/mystery work for the theater. Part of the department of stage and screen’s “Mainstage” season. 7:30 p.m. Wednesday-Saturday; 3 p.m. Sunday. Hoey Auditorium. (828) 227-2479

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 25

Pre-Mountain Heritage Day concert – Featuring bluegrass duo the Crowe Brothers. 7 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-3193

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

Mountain Heritage Day – Daylong celebration of mountain culture with music, dance and food; arts and crafts; contests and demonstrations; antique auto show; and 5-K footrace. (828) 227-3193

Catamount football – vs. Furman. 6 p.m. E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7338

OCTOBER 2009

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4

“Feelin’ Groovy” – A salute to Simon and Garfunkel by Jim Witter. “I Am a Rock,” “Homeward Bound,” “Mrs. Robinson” and more. Part of the Galaxy of Stars Series. 3 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 10

Tournament of Champions – Marching Band competition. All day. E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7242

THURSDAY-SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15-17

Campaign for Western Celebration – In honor of successful fund drive. Includes luncheons, receptions, entertainment and more. (828) 227-7024

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16-18

Homecoming weekend 2009 – Friday events include parade and Spirit Night, football vs. The Citadel at 4 p.m. Saturday; women’s soccer at 6 p.m. Friday and 2 p.m. Sunday. (828) 227-7335 or (877) 440-9990

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 21

Greater Asheville Luncheon Series – Featuring the Honors College. Reservations required. 11:45 a.m. Hilton Asheville, Biltmore Park, Asheville. (877) 440-9990

FRIDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23-25

Family Weekend – Food and fun. Catamount football vs. Wofford College at 4 p.m. (tentative) Saturday at E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7234

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24

Catamount football – vs. Wofford, Family Weekend and Sudler Trophy presentation. 4 p.m. E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7338

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 28

“North Carolina Rising” – Town hall meeting on rural economic development issues, hosted by the University of North Carolina Center for Public Television. 8 p.m. Hoey Auditorium. (919) 549-7089 or svickery@unctv.org

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Photo by Will Huddleston

THURSDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29-NOVEMBER 1

“Midsummer Night’s Dream” – Shakespeare’s classic set in Depression-era Appalachia. Part of the department of stage and screen “Mainstage” season. 7:30 p.m. Thursday-Saturday; 3 p.m. Sunday. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 30

Catamount soccer – vs. Appalachian State. 6 p.m. Catamount Athletic Complex. (828) 227-7338

NOVEMBER 2009

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 5

Indian Music – Performance by Shan Manickam. 7:30 p.m. Part of the Lectures, Concerts and Exhibitions Series. Coulter Recital Hall. (828) 227-7206

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7

Catamount football – vs. Elon. Hall of Fame Weekend. 1 p.m. E.J. Whitmire Stadium/Bob Waters Field. (828) 227-7338

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11

“On the Home Front” – Re-creation of a live Armed Forces Radio Service broadcast of a Command Performance radio show. 7:30 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center. (828) 227-2479

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 15

“Corbian the Dinosaur: A Glow-in-Dark Adventure” – A dinosaur discovers the true meaning of love in this combination of dance and electroluminescent creatures and characters. Part of the Galaxy of Stars Series. 3 p.m. Fine and Performing Arts Center (828) 227-2479



The photograph “Lake Wanaka – Tree & Ducks” that appeared in the winter 2009 edition of The Magazine of Western Carolina University, along with a calendar item about the annual Spring Literary Festival, is by Joseph Meigs, retired WCU professor of English. For more information about Meigs’ work, visit www.josephmeigs.com.

STAYING LOCAL, THINKING GLOBAL

Three exhibits mark the Fine Art Museum’s new season

The Fine Art Museum launches its 2009-10 season with three exhibits that, while grounded in Western North Carolina, demonstrate a wide geographical and philosophical scope. The exhibits run through Friday, Sept. 18.

“New Gifts: Selections from the Collection of Professor Emeritus Perry Kelly”

The exhibit features a selection of work in a variety of media donated to the museum from the personal collection of Kelly, formerly of the School of Art and Design.

“George Masa: A Photographic Vision of the Mountains”

This exhibit, in recognition of the 75th anniversary of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, features the photographs and field notes of George Masa, a native of Japan who explored the mountains of Western North Carolina and lobbied for the establishment of the national park.

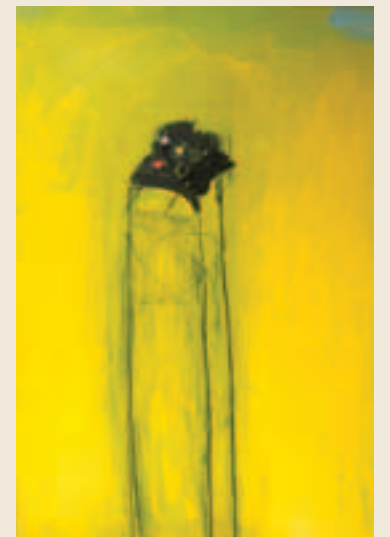
“Dean and Nancy Cramer Lettenstrom: Delicate Balance – Painting + Drawing”

Painter Dean Lettenstrom’s imagery offers a visual statement about the fragility of the human condition. Nancy Lettenstrom’s mixed media drawings, on handmade paper, often depict animals as representations of the natural world.

In Addition, “Soul’s Journey: Inside the Creative Process” will run Thursday, Oct. 1, through Saturday, Dec. 12, with work by more than 20 contemporary Southeastern artists in a variety of media.



For information, contact the museum at (828) 227-3591 or visit online at fineartmuseum.wcu.edu.



“Table at Fundy,” mixed media on canvas, 36 by 24 inches, by Dean Lettenstrom, 2009.

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Demonstrations of the ancient and rowdy Cherokee game of Indian ball (also known as "stickball") will be on the agenda Saturday, Sept. 26, at Mountain Heritage Day, WCU's annual celebration of Appalachian culture. For more information about Mountain Heritage Weekend at WCU, including a Sept. 25 concert by bluegrass favorites the Crowe Brothers, visit MountainHeritageDay.com or call (828) 227-3193.