

HANDMADE  
in  
AMERICA

## Small Towns Newsletter

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### Upcoming Events

3/5/10 - Bingo (Chimney Rock)

3/15/10 - HIA Marketing & Technology class for artists @ Andrews Valley Initiative, 6pm (Andrews)

3/20/10 - Coffee House Talent Night, WJ United Methodist Church (West Jefferson)

3/19-21/10 - [Chautauqua Andrews](#) (Andrews)

3/27/10 - [16th Annual Bass Tournament](#) (Hayesville)

3/27/10 - [62nd Annual Choral Festival @ Mars Hill College](#) (Mars Hill)

4/3/10 - Annual Easter Egg Hunt (Bakersville)

4/7/10 - Annual Mars Hill Empty Bowl Project (Mars Hill)

4/17/10 - Ashe Co. Arts Council's Spring Festival (West Jefferson)

### Judi's Ramblings

My sincere thanks to everyone for making me feel so welcome and valued as a member of the Small Towns Team at HandMade in America. Since we met last November at the Cluster meetings, I've settled in, learned how to drive a bit on snow and ice, and had a chance to visit several of you, despite the weather. David and I plan to get to each town by the end of March, and I'm always uplifted by his presence and insight. This remarkable winter weather has been a surprise to everyone, and I'm amazed and impressed at Mountain folks' fortitude and perseverance - Western North Carolina's people and vistas are truly a wonder to behold!



We're hoping to selectively recruit a few new small towns this year and reconnect with old ones, and the Rural Center's NC STEP program has attracted applications from Dillsboro and Robbinsville...we'll know if they were chosen in early May. Several of us attended the North Carolina Main Street conference together in New Bern, which led to lots of discussion about how Small Towns and STEP Towns and Main Street Towns in WNC might work together; you will certainly hear more about that at the May 26th Cluster gathering.

I've also started to meet some of our collaborators and funders, locally and at the Emerging Issues Forum in Raleigh, which focused on creativity. This was an unusual meeting - they encouraged us to bring cell phones and make sure they were charged so we could answer audience polling questions using text messaging, and text questions to speakers! I especially liked Daniel Pink's remarks on the importance of creative people in today's economy, Roger Martin on Design Thinking and Kelly Lee from Innovation Philadelphia.

4/19/10 - HIA Marketing & Technology class for artists @ Courthouse, 6pm (Bakersville)

4/19/10 - Earth Week Celebrations (every day of the week) (Andrews)

4/23,24/10 - Multi-cultural Women's Development Conference ([One Dozen Who Care](#)) @ Hinton Rural Life Center (Hayesville)

4/24/10 - [Gorge Sale on the Trail](#) (Gorge-wide rummage; Gerton to Chimney Rock to Rumbling Bald)

4/24/10 - [Mountain Thunder Car Show](#) (Old Fort)

4/24/10 - [Pioneer Day](#) (Old Fort)

5/8/10 - Madison on Main Arts Festival (Marshall)

5/17/10 - HIA Marketing & Technology class for artists @ Andrews Valley Initiative, 6pm (Andrews)

5/28,29/10 - Heritage Festival @ Riverfront Park (Bryson City)

#### Ongoing events:

Live Music @ Zuma's every Thursday! (Marshall)

Todd CommUnity Dances held on a Friday, every month through May  
Todd's [2010 Summer Music Series schedule](#) coming soon! (Todd)

#### Key Websites

[HandMade in America](#)

[NC Rural Center - STEP](#)

[BRNHA](#)

[NCCDI](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

#### Small Town Inspirations

Throughout Western North Carolina, our communities are busy implementing projects funded by the NC Rural Center, NC State Employees Credit Union, the Pigeon River Fund, and several private foundations.



**Andrews:** Asheville-based architect, Terry Meek, helped Andrews illustrate its vision for downtown revitalization; this visual display will be

So for now, I have to say some days there's too much on my plate, but at least it's always full. Please don't hesitate to call or write to me with ideas, suggestions, and concerns. And take time to play a little...

*Play will be to the 21st century what work was to the last 300 years of industrial society-our dominant way of knowing, doing and creating value. - from **A Whole New Mind** by Daniel Pink*

#### Spring Cluster Meeting Scheduled

Please mark your calendars for our spring Cluster Meeting! This spring we will be holding this event at Warren Wilson College, for all communities. **The meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 26, 2010 from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm.**

Please bring a strong delegation to share your projects and stories, and interact with your fellow communities and our partner organizations. Please bring door prizes to share (geared towards visits



to your community) and encourage new members of your community organization to come. We will send out a notice to our community contacts with more details closer to the gatherings. Please make plans to come!

*Image, Ann Baker and Crossnore delegation; Old Fort Cluster Meeting, 2009*



used to sell the initiative to private investors. The town is also working to bring broadband into the area, as it feels that broadband has the potential to bring in more dollars to local governments than water & sewer to local government, and many areas still must rely on dialup. *Image, downtown Andrews illustration, Terry Meek*



**Bakersville:** After 13 years, Bakersville is now completing a \$750,000 renovation of the historic Mitchell County Courthouse, with major grant funding from the NC Rural Center, the NC State Employees Credit Union and the Phillips Foundation. Project managers are seeking LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) certification for the building. When it opens in spring of 2010, partners Mayland Community College, Appalachian State and Agriculture Extension Service will offer classes and use the teleconferencing center with 100 MG broadband. The Courthouse will also house an entrepreneurship center. Part of a regional "Craft your Vacation" promotion, Bakersville is using funding from the NC Rural Center to complete asset mapping, and working on expanding fishing tourism with several other communities. Long range, Bakersville is looking at ways to best utilize all buildings, including studio space for new artists, revisiting the early HandMade "cookbook," broadband expansion in joint effort with 4 counties, and working with Yancey and Madison counties to designate scenic byways. *Image, Historic Mitchell County Courthouse*



**Bryson City:** Bryson City completed additional sections and components of its downtown streetscape plan with its NC STEP funds during 2009. The Town has been implementing this plan in phases over the past few years as resources have become available. The streetscape is a critical part of the community's overall tourism program, connecting the Great Smoky Mountain Railroad's development with other downtown development. *Image, street scape plan implementation*



**Chimney Rock:** The Village now has new, clean restrooms - a huge and much needed improvement! There is also a new recycling program, in partnership with Lake Lure and the village of Chimney Rock. Chimney Rock is also in the process of build an amphitheater, which will be used for special events, music and weddings. With funding from the NC Rural Center, they recently finished pouring cement slab for gathering place and putting in landscaping to disguise power lines and hope to eventually build seating into the bank. *Image, site for new Chimney Rock gathering place*



**Crossnore:** Winter has not slowed us down - the future looks exciting in Crossnore. CCE is spending \$25,000 from the \$50,000 we received from the Rural Center-NCSTEP Grant, clearing a path through the woods from downtown to the highway. Taking down trees to clear our trail by the stone chimneys at the ruins of the old YMCA pool will begin this spring, as will the first phase of our Bike and Walking Trail system. We hope this project will be completed this summer. Our High Country Council of Governments helped us prepare a Bike and Pedestrian Trail Plan master plan, which was adopted by town council in January, 2009. With the different trails identified, it will

help us get grants to develop each phase. Asheville-based architect, Terry Meek created a concept for a footbridge over Highway 221 as a part of this plan. He has carefully and sensitively researched the town to artfully create a structure that would be a memorable landmark for our town and gateway to the High Country. *Image, Footbridge Concept by Terry Meek*



**Hayesville:** The Alcohol referendum passed recently in Clay County, resulting in a employment boom in Hayesville - 2 new restaurants opened, as well as an ABC store and an Ingles. The Nelson Heritage Site now has a Cherokee Winter House, thanks to help from professors at ASU and WCU. Exhibits will be incorporated in Hayesville's school system's curriculum. They are incorporating an urban walking trail that will connect the park with other sites, circumnavigating Hayesville and now want to develop a driving

tour connecting the region's Native America heritage sites. The Jackrabbit Trail is now completed, a total of 15 miles of trails for off-road biking. Parking is becoming an issue (this is good) and the trail now needs restrooms. Jackrabbit Trail is now becoming a recreational tourism destination, attracting hikers, walkers, wildlife lovers, cross country teams, etc. A kiosk has been built with trail info, with hopes to add picnic tables, grills, and a pavilion. We are working to increase our memberships in CCCRA to not only increase our numbers, but to increase representation in our community. The courthouse is the centerpiece of our community, so I'm hopeful our community will show its support in the efforts to save it and reuse it!! *Image, Jack Rabbit Mountain Biking Trail*



**Marshall:** After Marshall held a design charrette a few years ago, signage at entrance of town and beautiful lights on the bridge to Blannahasset Island have finally been installed! Doug McKenzie designed the sign near the island (it shows the town of Marshall as of 1920 - visitors can line up to see them overlayed against the existing structures) and also bike racks to welcome the cycling community. A fishing pier was built with help from the Pigeon River Fund, which will include signage about taking care of the river and plant identification, and the Town also plans to install information kiosks.

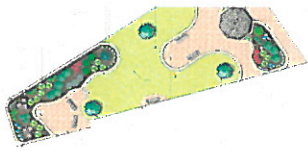
Riverlink's "Blueways Project," which will be a route along the French Broad to connect Asheville to Knoxville should make Marshall a destination to paddlers. *Image, Historic Marshall sign by Doug McKenzie*



**Mars Hill:** Mars Hill just completed a market analysis and survey, funded by the NC Rural Center, of more than 1,000 consumers, concluding there is unmet demand for more restaurants, apparel and entertainment businesses. The Town of Mars Hill used its NC STEP funds to conduct a design charrette for the primary commercial areas of Mars Hill. Many ideas emerged from the charrette process, including the Economic Development Committee's concept of creating an arts district as a component of revitalizing the downtown area. Working with the Town and HandMade, LandDesign Associates provided the service of intern Andy Cole to develop a landscape plan for the Library expansion and adjacent pedestrian access. A Sustainability Committee has been formed as a part of the economic development group. The group has worked with the town to pass a law encouraging water conservation and are now looking for ways to improve the current recycling system. *Image, Land Design Charrette work by Andy Cole*



**Old Fort:** A new park is planned for the center of town - Bradley Park - and



local business owner, Jennifer Brown, of Greenmeadow Landscaping, is donating all materials and labor (estimated value \$35,000). The community is constructing a replica of Old Fort's 1776 Davidson Fort, located along the North Carolina Civil War Trail, with an all volunteer effort. The NCSU

Design Charrette helped Old Fort with their new town seal and street scape designs, and new signage/road markers. Dean Kanipe, with funding from the NC Rural Center, presented the results of a market study of residents, finding Old Fort lost \$25 million in retail sales to surrounding towns due to a shortage of full service restaurants, department and grocery stores. The Old Fort Mountain Heritage Alliance hopes to help market the old City Maintenance building and old Exxon station for new retail and commercial business. *image, Bradley Park*



**Todd:** Restoring the stream bank of the New River at Todd Island Park, in cooperation with National Commission for the New River, is underway and funds are being sought for a water and sewer project for the business district. The Green Valley Park Association is seeking a walking trail easement from Appalachian State University for a Greenways project. A video documentary, called, "Todd Sustains Us," on land use and sustainability will be started with a grant from North Atlantic Humanities Council. *Image, Todd Island Park*



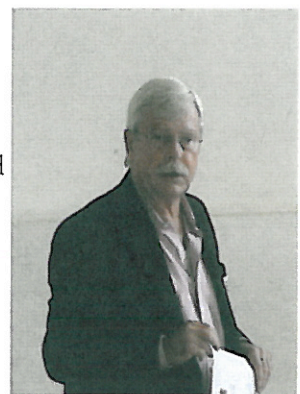
**West Jefferson:** Backstreet Park was developed on the edge of town with a path up the hill to library, and a performance stage was built for concerts in the park. The county renovated and expanded the library with a \$4 million investment, and a new week long literary festival "On the Same Page" was held the 3rd week in September Ashe County. *Image, path to renovated Ashe County Library.*

### Workshops, Conferences, and Forums

#### North Carolina Main Street Conference (follow up from New Bern)

"The state conference of NC Main Street was really an extra sized version of our annual Small Towns meeting in the spring, with added impact of having vendors and a larger number of keynote speakers. All three keynotes were excellent, inspiring and offered valuable advice and John Schallert of Destination University, who also offered a breakout session, was most helpful. The chance to interact with other towns across the state beyond our own group was beneficial, if only to reinforce that the West is leading the state in small town leadership and innovation. Main Street's core organization is fine but we have that already in the Handmade organization. But, duly note, there are professional gurus out there that, if affordable, would work wonders for us. The value of the Main Street experience will take time and vision to measure in a quantitative way but given the success of the past 14 years with Handmade, this measurement will ring true."

**Bob Hensley** *(pictured right)*



"The NC Main Street Conference held in New Bern last month offered HandMade towns much to chew on, but for Andrews the highlight was the keynote and breakout sessions of Jon Schallert about creating a destination for your downtown. Here are some notes and websites that will peak your interest:



Keynote: "Creating a Destination Downtown, One Business at a Time"  
 Breakout Session: "Applying Destination Principles to Your Downtown"  
 Jon Schallert is president of The Schallert Group, Inc. and the websites are [www.JonSchallert.com](http://www.JonSchallert.com) and [www.DestinationBootCamp.com](http://www.DestinationBootCamp.com). For training without having to leave home, there's [www.DestinationUniversity.com](http://www.DestinationUniversity.com)."



**Bob Ferreira** (pictured right)

"These comments reinforce the reasons I wanted Judi and small town representatives to attend the Main Street Conference:

1. To learn,
  2. To get new ideas and inspiration,
  3. To realize what you already have and do (with much less),
  4. To recognize that you are leaders in the State and region at what you are doing individually and more uniquely, as a region,
  5. To bond with Judi as an outstanding resource to work with you to move forward.
- Thanks for taking the time to come and for your continued interest and energy in the HandMade Small Towns Program"



**David Quinn** (pictured right)

### Supporting Sustainable Communities: Opportunities and Challenges for Community Colleges

April 26-27, 2010 at the Crowne Plaza, Asheville, NC (Hosted by Haywood Community College and the TA3). Topics for discussion include: skills for new green-oriented industries and for sustainable practices in other sectors; enhancing local and sustainable agriculture, natural resources, and crafts; "Green thinking" in all programs; making campuses models of sustainability. More info [here](#).

### HandMade in America sponsors FREE Marketing & Technology Classes for Artists

February, 22, 2010 - Ashe County Arts Council, West Jefferson, NC (class notes available, contact info below)

March 15, 2010 - Andrews Valley Cultural Center, Andrews, NC @ 6pm

April 19, 2010 - Mitchell Co. Historic Courthouse, Bakersville, NC @ 6pm

May 17, 2010 - Andrews Valley Cultural Center, Andrews, NC @ 6pm

\*A special thank you to the AT&T Foundation for making these workshops possible. Please register via email, request class notes, or send questions to Megan Williams, [mwilliams@handmadeinamerica.org](mailto:mwilliams@handmadeinamerica.org)

### Grant & Internship Opportunities

#### North Carolina Downtown Development Authority

The Board of Directors for the NCDDA has determined a priority for 2010 is to actively promote the improvement of downtown storefronts across the state. To begin, the NCDDA will be selecting two towns in 2010 through a competitive application process to help establish a façade grant program from the beginning and one where we will be assisting a community with re-establishing a program. Deadline for application is March 30, 2010; more information can be found [here](#).

#### The Urban and Community Forestry Grant Program

This grant program offers funds to promote forestry programs. The program will offer matching grants between \$1,000 and \$15,000 to encourage citizen involvement in forestry programs. The grants are awarded through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service and are administered by the N.C. Division of Forest Resources. Eligible applicants include local and state governments, public educational institutions and nonprofits. Applications are due March 31; more information can be found [here](#).

#### North Carolina Department of Community Assistance

DCA recently contacted HandMade to let us know they have already received many qualified applicants for internships this summer. They should know more about funding for these positions in mid-April. In the meantime, if any of you are interested in having an intern this summer, please contact [Judi](#) to let her know.

### Learning from our Neighbors

By **Megan Williams** (pictured)

On a recent trip to Chattanooga, I decided to investigate the city's emerging, vibrant arts community. While there I met with the nonprofit, Create Here, which got its start in 2006 with its Arts Move program ([www.artsmove.org](http://www.artsmove.org)). Arts Move directly aided efforts to get artists to Chattanooga. Through a public-private partnership between private foundations and the city, the program offered artists \$15,000 toward their mortgage and gave them a \$2,500 moving allowance. In return, the artists committed to living within a three-mile downtown footprint. The footprint was established to include neighborhoods in need of rehab. Now, with creative minds moving in, the neighborhoods and downtown have been given new life. To date, through its Arts Move program, Create Here has directly helped almost 30 artists establish themselves in Chattanooga and more are coming! Once ranked the most polluted city in the nation, Chattanooga has now cleaned up its natural environment, revitalized its downtown, and thanks to groups like Create Here, attracted a creative class that is there to stay! As many of HandMade in America's small towns seek out ways to attract artists or create an arts district, a visit to Create Here's website ([www.createhere.org](http://www.createhere.org)) or better yet, Chattanooga, might be in order. Be inspired!



### Community Capitals Project Update

By **Dr. Carol Kline** (pictured)

After completing visits to seven small towns in the summer and fall of 2009 (West Jefferson, Bakersville, Mars Hill, Marshall, Hayesville, Crossnore and Chimney Rock), the data in 60 audio files from focus groups and interviews is now being coded and summarized. Our conversations are being converted to "flow-chart" type images that capture the multitude of impacts that community development projects have had in the towns, and each impact is categorized as one or more of the seven community capitals (economic, social, human, cultural, natural, built and political). The results will depict the types of impacts that the Small Town program has had over the years, and will serve as a new way to measure the influence and power of community development initiatives. Each town will receive draft documents to review prior to the May 26th Cluster meeting, where I will present the major findings. The results of the related online survey conducted in the fall are now available; please contact Judi Jetson for a copy. Thanks for all your help with this!




### Other HandMade Happenings



#### Save the Date!

HandMade: the Western North Carolina Craft, Architecture & Design Expo will be held June 25 & 26, 2010 at the North Carolina Arboretum. The event invites the public to join artists, architects, builders and designers to share and learn about successful collaborations between craft artists, homeowners and industry professionals. Drawing from the tremendous craft resources that are a unique and vital part of Western North Carolina, the event will emphasize craftsmanship in architectural elements and design for both high-end and mid-range home markets. Tickets are \$15 for a single day and \$25 for both days and includes entry to the Friday evening keynote and reception.

Find out more about this event at


**HandMade:**  
*The Western North Carolina*  
**Craft, Architecture & Design Expo**  
**JUNE 25 & 26, 2010**  
 AT The North Carolina Arboretum  
 Asheville, North Carolina  
 MORE INFORMATION AT:  
[handmadeinamerica.org/designexpo](http://handmadeinamerica.org/designexpo)  
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in AMERICA

PHOTO COURTESY OF HANDMADE HOUSE AT THE RAMBLE © 2009 STEWART YOUNG

[www.handmadeinamerica.org/designexpo](http://www.handmadeinamerica.org/designexpo).

### Craft Trends to Watch!

Arts participation is on the increase, with personal arts creation by the public (making art, playing music), demand for art education in schools and the number of arts organizations growing steadily. Released January 27, 2010 the latest National Arts Index reports a 4.2% decline mainly as a result of losses in charitable giving and declining attendance at large cultural institutions. For a copy of the full report click [here](#) for National Arts Index website.

The Professional Craft Industry's annual economic impact in WNC is over \$200 million, almost double its impact in 1995. Facts and figures are available about average annual income of craft galleries (\$1/2 million), craft schools, suppliers and nonprofits. For more information, download the summary brochure [here](#).

### Visit from the North Carolina Community Development Initiative

Sheree Ramirez from the North Carolina Community Development Initiative will visit HandMade in America March 3, 4 and 5, 2010 for a site visit. We look forward to having her here in Asheville and also plan to take her to visit Bakersville, Hayesville, Mars Hill and Marshall. We look forward to telling your stories to Sheree!

### Adventures Abroad

David Quinn will travel on behalf of HandMade to British Columbia at the end of March. He will make a presentation on "Arts & Culture - A Focus on Sustainable Economic Development" to the communities of Nelson and Creston, BC, which are a part of the Selkirk Loop range of mountains. David will give presentations about the HandMade model of economic development and will talk in detail about the Small Towns Program. Please feel free to follow up with David about his trip when he returns in April.

### Fall 2009 Cluster Meeting Recap

#### Opinions shared amongst HandMade Small Towns

"HandMade is the framework in which we can operate," says Bob Ferreira from Andrews, who has been sharing with other HandMade towns: "You'll all be amazed at what a resource we can be to one another." Ferreira visited Todd for the Liberty Parade; Crossnore and Mars Hill representatives also visited Andrews. "You're not going to get private investment if you don't share the vision. We were motivated greatly by people we met at HIA (e.g. David Holcomb, Terry Meek), who helped us conceptualize how we brought projects together."

Another proponent of town-to-town relationships, Bob Hensley of Bakersville, says "If you participated in all of the events and activities in the small towns from one end of our cluster to the other, do you know how long it would take to do it all? Five years. Let's start a marketing campaign called 'What are You Doing for the Next 5 Years? Collectively, we can swing a bigger stick.'"

#### Resource People for Small Towns mentioned in Fall Cluster Meetings 2009

**Billy Parrish** from Georgia's Dept of Commerce helped Andrews put together statistics about backpackers, fishermen, hikers, and natural resources. Phone # 404-679-3115, email [bparrish@dca.state.ga.us](mailto:bparrish@dca.state.ga.us)

**Ken Wright** recently moved to the Mars Hill area, retired from the U.S. Census Bureau, he's willing to help all HandMade communities with demographics and population data, email [wayne.k.wright@gmail.com](mailto:wayne.k.wright@gmail.com)

**Sherry Adams**, Main Street Coordinator for WNC (DCA), is happy to brainstorm ideas and make connections. Phone # 828-251-6194, email [sadams@nccommerce.com](mailto:sadams@nccommerce.com)

**Terry Meek**, architect, helped Andrews with a downtown master plan design, and Crossnore with a new bridge conceptual design. Phone # 828-225-6066, email [etm@ctm-architect.com](mailto:etm@ctm-architect.com)

**David Holcomb**, development consultant, worked in Old Fort and Mars Hill. email: [david@theholcombco.com](mailto:david@theholcombco.com)

### Reminders

### Photos

We are always looking for photos to include in our newsletters and publications and on our new website. If you have any photos you would like to share, please send them to Judi.

### Events & Activities

Our communities develop and produce creative, diverse and entertaining activities throughout the region. Please continue to send us your upcoming events, newspaper articles about your projects and any other press so we can have them for future use. We look forward to discovering what you all have going on in your communities!

### Assessment Reports

Please remember to send your Impact Assessment Report forms and Quarterly Reports to Donna ([info@handmadeinamerica.org](mailto:info@handmadeinamerica.org)). Assessment forms can be downloaded by clicking [here](#).

In order to distribute this newsletter to as many interested parties as possible, we need your help! Please send updated email addresses for those people who would like to receive the newsletter, or simply forward on the newsletter and encourage people to click the "Join Our Mailing List" link.

I look forward to seeing you all this May at the Cluster Meeting!

Sincerely,

Judi Jetson  
HandMade in America  
[jjetson@handmadeinamerica.org](mailto:jjetson@handmadeinamerica.org)  
(828) 252-0121 x 304

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