



Small Town Conversations  
**STC**  
NEWSLETTER : 2013 April

## Welcome



With the warming over the past few days it is certainly feeling like spring, finally! We are well on our way into the 2013 and gearing up for the upcoming Small Town Summit and Small Town Conversation. Next week we'll be in Old Fort for the *Small Town Conversation: Crafting Studio Tours*, and don't worry, there is still time to register! We are excited to have Mayor Susan Egelston joining us for the May 29th Summit to share the success stories from Star, NC. So all of those who have been wondering how to talk about rural creative placemaking and community economic development with elected officials in your community, you'll be excited to hear from Mayor Egelston too. We are expecting big things from each of the Small Towns as they take the stage to share their 2012 accomplishments and 2013 plans and progress. We are switching it up a bit this year and will send instructions shortly, keep your eyes peeled!

By the time of the Summit, we'll be adding another Small Town to the mix. Columbus is gearing up for their assessment; feel free to reach out to their steering committee to impart some words of wisdom and congratulations. Their assessment is scheduled for May 14 -16. Contact me for this information.

Finally, please make some time in your schedule to reach out to your state representatives in the next few weeks. The proposed budget cuts from the Governor's office will deal a blow to many economic development entities in North Carolina, several of which are HandMade partners and have worked with some of your communities. We have included a [sample letter](#) and tips on addressing the issues below. You know the power of community economic development firsthand, your voice is very important during this time. Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.

**Jess Kryzenske**

Community Development Manager

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## Updates

### Crafting Community Parades

We are proud to have worked with Martha Enzmann, our Community Parade mentor, who has provided such great guidance to develop creative parades in their community. Crafting Vibrant Communities is a program funded by the National Endowment for the Arts to help rural communities to grow upon their cultural and artistic assets, and to learn from their peers who have successfully completed those projects. We have already completed our Crafting Community Parades workshop, and Parade Mentor, Martha Enzmann of Todd has followed up and worked with Andrews, Marshall and Old Fort to institute their own parades that reflect the spirit of their community.

Save the date for their upcoming parades to see a unique take on the traditional parade:

- Andrews, April 20- 11 am Andrews Elementary -meet to dress up at 10 am)
- Marshall, June 13-Mermaid Parade
- Old Fort, TBA, late June



### Gastonia's Historic Loray Mill Set for Incredible Renovation

The Loray Mill, one of the world's largest textile mills, which has been closed since 1993, has been sold by Preservation North Carolina and is set to embark on a \$39 million historic rehabilitation and renovation project.

The rehabbed mill will contain market rate lofts, commercial office space, and amenities for tenants including a gym, pool and storage units. There are also plans for a restaurant and a permanent exhibit focusing on the history of the mill. This project will be the catalyst for major revitalization for West Gastonia, an area that has declined since the closing of the mill, nearly 20 years ago. The Loray Mill National Register Historic District, which includes about 350 homes, will benefit from the development of the mill and through the use of historic rehabilitation tax credits. This marks the largest rehabilitation project fostered by Preservation North Carolina, and can set a great example for communities with vacant mills and factories. [Click here](#) to find out more about the preservation project, and save the date for Sunday, April 28 for Gastonia Preservation Committee's celebration.

## Announcements

### Crafting Vibrant Communities Studio Tour Program

There's still time to register for next week's Studio Tour Workshop. Communities interested in introducing a new studio tour, or refining a current tour will gain insights from artists and town leaders who have experienced proven success implementing tours in their community. Studio tour mentors include Rob and Beth Mangum, Mangum Pottery and Weaverville Art Safari, Lee Carol Giduz, Caldwell Arts Council, Jane Lonon, Ashe County Arts Council, and Denise Cook, Toe River Arts Council.

[View details and Register](#) now! Members receive a discounted registration. [Join HandMade](#) now to benefit from discounted events year-round.

### Small Town Summit

[Register](#) for our annual *Small Town Summit* to be held May 29 at the Osher Lifetime Learning Institute (OLLI) Reuter Center at UNCA. This year's summit will be focused on Rural Creative Placemaking and will inspire continued growth in community. [Join HandMade](#) now to benefit from discounted events year-round.

### Food Guide Opportunity

Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) and its Tourism Council, which includes representatives from the 13 states within the Appalachian Region, are spearheading efforts to identify and produce a guide to the region's most distinctive local food destinations. This map publication will help generate new visitation throughout Appalachia and further establish Appalachia, with its unparalleled cultural, historical, and natural resources, as one of the most worthy travel destinations in the world. The Appalachian Local Food Map Guide will be published in the Spring of 2014 Appalachian Heritage Magazine. Sites should accept visitors, and have a focus on local food, including farm-to-table restaurants, local breweries, farmers markets, and more. [Click here to nominate your favorite local establishments by May 15.](#)

## Small Town Updates



### Hayesville



The Cherokee Homestead Exhibit will be a busy place this month. The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area helped to arrange a visit from Canadian downtown developers to see the exhibit, Clay County Historical Museum, and Jackrabbit Trail to learn how small towns can develop sites that will energize their community and attract visitors. The exhibit is also hosting students from Tri-County Community College, Western Carolina University, and Hayesville Middle School for field trip experiences in April.

Work on a two-mile urban trail that will connect the Cherokee Homestead Exhibit to Spikebuck Mound has begun. A professional trail-builder visited the site April 3 to scope out the anticipated route of the trail and plan work that will be completed later this month. The trail is located adjacent to school property and will become an outdoor classroom where students can study native plants and water quality in Town Creek.

### Marshall

Plenty of spring activities are taking place in Marshall. The first French Broad Friday of the season, *Mamma Mia!* will be in celebration of Mother's Day on May 10 from 5-10pm. Come to Downtown Marshall to celebrate Mother's Day weekend with downtown businesses staying open late, and carriage rides to and from the island and downtown. There will be an *Old Time Jam* on the Island stage at 5pm and one man band, *Shake It Like A Caveman* will perform at the Courthouse at 6:30pm.

For more information on this event, contact Anne Schneider at the Downtown Marshall Association at 828.649.3444 or [director@downtownmarshallnc.com](mailto:director@downtownmarshallnc.com).

### West Jefferson



There are a lot of upcoming events in Ashe County. Spring Fest will take place on April 20 and include a daylong celebration of the arts with student art exhibits and hands-on activities. There are also quite a few businesses opening up in West Jefferson this spring, including: Scarlett Creek, Carolina Country Wines, Candy Shack, Everything Has a Story, plus a jewelry store, antique shop, and an art school. The town will also be completing phase 3 & 4 of their Streetscape plan. This plan will be implemented at the mid-blocks where we will be adding curb extensions with plantings, brickpavers, and permanent seating! By June, West Jefferson will be spry with another great face lift. They have also completed an exciting new workplan for 2013 with HandMade staff to gear up for more great work!

## Upcoming Meetings



**Change and Adaptation:  
Leadership and Marketing Strategies for Nonprofits  
in the Current Political Environment**  
**April 23, Hendersonville**

Hendersonville Resourceful Communities is hosting a one-day workshop focused on organizational leadership issues and how leadership succession, development, and recruitment can prepare your organization for change. Participants will explore different types of leadership, learn effective ways to recruit new leaders and members, and learn successful strategies to help tell your organization's story.

[Click here](#) for details and to register.

## Grant Opportunities



### Promote Community Organizing for the Disadvantaged

The Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People (SDOP) participates in the empowerment of economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people who are seeking to change the structures that perpetuate poverty, oppression, and injustice. They currently support groups in the United States who are oppressed by poverty and social systems, want to take charge of their own lives, are organizing to do something about their own conditions, and have decided that what they are going to do will produce long-term changes in their lives or communities. Grants of up to \$20,000 are provided. Applications may be submitted throughout the year. Visit the SDOP website to review the grant criteria.

[Click here](#) for more information and to apply.

### Support for Outdoor Youth Programs The North Face Explore Fund

**Application deadline: May 1, 2013**

The North Face Explore Fund aims to inspire the next generation of young explorers and conservationists by supporting nonprofit organizations that are working to get youth outdoors to explore their natural world. Grants are provided to organizations that encourage youth outdoor participation, focusing on creating more connections of children to nature, increasing access to both front and backcountry recreation, as well as providing experiential education for both personal and environmental health. In 2013, the Fund will award 30 grants of \$2,500; ten additional grants of varying amounts will be awarded based on online voting taking place this summer.

[Click here](#) for more details and to submit an online application.

## Advocacy

Governor McCrory's budget proposal for the state presents a grave future for rural economic development, statewide, and it is up to everyone who may be affected by these cuts to make the case for their community and region. Proposed cuts that may result in lost opportunity for rural communities include:

- Re-allocation of \$65 million from the GoldenLEAF Foundation, which provides grants for rural development.
- A \$10 million cut to the North Carolina Rural Center, which funds rural infrastructure and the NC Step program that has been a resource to HandMade Small Towns since its inception.
- A \$3.8 million cut to the North Carolina Community Development Initiative (NCCDI) which will cut the entire program. The NCCDI provides operational funding for community development corporations that meet the needs of distressed communities in the state.
- The closing of 5 historic sites, including the Vance Birthplace in Weaverville and the Mountain Gateway Museum in Old Fort.
- Over \$3.6 million in cuts to economic development nonprofits and organizations, including regional economic development commissions, councils of government, and more.

These cuts, as a whole, represent a complete disregard for community-economic development in rural communities across North Carolina, and will hinder the efforts small towns have made to create jobs, develop cultural and tourism activities, and enhance the sense of place in their community.

What can you do?

- Contact your representative or senator and schedule a meeting or phone call to explain how these organizations have helped your community, topics may include:
  - Assistance you have received from the NC Rural Center in form of NC Step, infrastructure grants, etc.
  - Jobs that have been created as a result of external grants and funding (from Rural Center, GoldenLEAF, etc.)
- Send a letter to your representative explaining how these cuts will negatively affect your community's progress.

[See sample letter here](#)

## Read More

- [Message from GoldenLEAF Foundation President, Dan Gerlach](#)
- [Statement from Abdul Rasheed, CEO of NCCDI](#)
- [Article about the cuts to the NC Rural Center](#)
- [Article about closing the Vance Birthplace and Mountain Gateway Museum](#)

## Events Calendar

- April 13, 8am - 1pm, *Farmer's Market* (Ashe County)
- April 20, *Spring Fest* (West Jefferson)
- April 25, 7:30 pm, *The Marvelous Wonderettes, touring off-Broadway production*, Ashe Civic Center (Ashe County)
- April 24-27, *ARTifacts Yard Sale*, fundraiser event for the Ashe County Arts Council (Ashe County)
- May 3-5, *French Broad River Festival* (Hot Springs)
- April 27, *The Ronny Cox Trio*, Peacock Playhouse (Hayesville) [Click here](#) for more information.
- April 27, *Annual Pioneer Day*, the Mountain Gateway Museum, (Old Fort) [Click here](#) for more information.
- May 1-30, *Postcards from the Edge*- traveling exhibit of postcard sized art from 8 counties in western North Carolina.
- May 10, 5-10pm, *French Broad Friday: Mamma Mia! Mother's Day Celebration* (Marshall) [Click here](#) for more information.
- May 11, *Music on the Mountain* (Chimney Rock)
- May 18, *Spring GO Festival*, Gaterhing Place (Chimney Rock)
- May 24-27, *Memorial Day Weekend and Summer Kick-Off*, Fontana Village (Graham County) [Click here](#) for more information.
- May 24-27, *Freedom Celebration Memorial Day Weekend Celebration and 5k Race* (Hayesville) [Click here](#) for more information.
- May 25, 9am-2pm, *3rd Annual Silent Auction Fundraiser*, 9am-2pm (Todd)
- May 31-June 1, *North Carolina Gold Festival*, Mountain Gateway Museum (Old Fort) [Click here](#) for more information.

## On-going Events

- Community Music Jam, Marianna Black Library, 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 6-7:30 pm (Bryson City)
- Family Movie Day at the Marianna Black Library, Tuesdays at 3:30pm (Bryson City)
- Classic Movies at Marianna Black Library, 2nd and 4th Saturdays at 4pm (Bryson City)
- Bingo, first Fridays, 7pm, fire station (Chimney Rock)
- Crossnore Jams at Miracle Grounds Coffee Shop, 1st Fridays in June August and Dec, and 2nd Fridays in July, September and November, 7pm (Crossnore)
- Mountain Valley Farmer's Market, Saturdays on the Square, 8am-12pm, May - October (Hayesville)
- Live music every Friday night at The Iron Horse Station Hotel, Restaurant & Tavern , 24 South Andrews Ave., Hot Springs, NC 28743 (Hot Springs)
- Live Country Music and Dance Every Friday, 7pm At the Walnut Volunteer Fire Department, on US Hwy. 25/70 near Walnut.(Madison County)
- Traditional Music at the Depot, Fridays, 7pm, free (Marshall)
- Live Music at Zuma's every Thursday, 7pm (Marshall)
- Murphy First Friday Art Walk!, 5-8pm, May - November, downtown Murphy (Murphy)
- Mountain Music, The Rockett Building on Main Street, Fridays, 7-10pm (Old Fort)
- ArtsMart, Arrowhead Artists and Artisans League showcase and sell locally-made arts and crafts, 1st Saturdays, 10am-4pm at the railroad depot (Old Fort)
- Informal Jam on the Porch on the porch of Mountain Gateway Museum, Sundays, 2-4pm (Old Fort)
- Classic Car Show, 3rd Saturdays, 3-5pm (Old Fort)
- Music On The Square, in front of the Courthouse Fridays, 7-11pm, Main Street (Robbinsville)
- Story telling at Todd General Store, Tuesdays at 5pm, May - October (Todd)
- Dinner and Bluegrass at Todd General Store, Fridays at 6pm, May - November (Todd)
- Todd Ruritan Club BBQ supper, South Fork Baptist Church, 1st Sunday each month, 4-7pm (Todd)
- Ashe County Farmer's Market on the Backstreet, Saturdays 8 am -1 pm, April - October(West Jefferson)
- Gallery Crawl, open house at most galleries & studios, 2nd Fridays, 5-8pm, June - October (West Jefferson)
- Classes, dances and concerts are held each week at the John C Campbell Folk School.  
[Click here](#) for details (Brasstown)