



## Small Town Summit Coming May 29!

At this year's Summit, we're focusing on Rural Creative Placemaking! With this focus, we'll talk about how to bring in ALL of the stakeholders in your community to develop a vibrant place that capitalizes on the craft and cultural heritage assets in your rural community. There will be four breakout sessions that each cover a facet of building a creative economy:

- **The Power of Public Art:** This panel discussion will explore the question of "why" many have the need for public art and delve into the process of engaging artists, getting ideas from the public, and installing to animate and activate your downtown. We have a diverse group consisting of mural artists, public art sculptors, and others who are experienced in public art pieces ready to answer your questions.
- **How to Tell Your Story:** Bringing in all groups and stakeholders to community revitalization is key, but first you have to spark their interest. Telling your community's story is the first step to bring people in, and telling it effectively helps to grow support for revitalization efforts. In the session, *How to Tell Your Story*, HandMade's executive director, Gwynne Rukenbrod, will discuss tools for telling your story to an audience of one or many.
- **Mountain Music:** This session will focus on capturing the unique character of your community through music. We'll have representatives from the new Blue Ridge National Heritage Area Music Trails speaking about how they market their music events and how your community can realize the full potential of cultural events as a unique feature in your town.
- **Engaging Elected Officials:** Elected officials provide the much needed government support for grassroots revitalization efforts. In the breakout session Engaging Elected Officials, we are very excited to have Judi Jetson and Avery County Commissioners present tips on how to work with the different levels of elected officials.

[Click here](#) to register.

## Studio Tour Workshop Wrap-up

HandMade in America's Peer Mentoring program, a key initiative in our Economic Development work, is made possible through a grant from NEA Art Works. Our creative placemaking approach to economic development applies grassroots, volunteer-led efforts to highlight the rich and abundant craft and cultural assets that define each small town in Western North Carolina. HandMade formed this Peer Mentoring program to establish town-to-town mentoring relationships that build strong regional bonds, provide a network of support and resources, and result in successful community revitalization projects.

We recently held our first Crafting Studio Tours Small Town Conversation, which was met with great success! Keynote speakers, Rob and Beth Mangum, owners of Mangum Pottery and founding members of the very successful Weaverville Art Safari, joined the HandMade team to provide mentorship. They are now working on the creation of a handbook for towns interested in creating a Studio Tour. This project will have a lasting impact on community life for participating towns as we engage artists and community leaders in improving the cultural/tourism opportunities that help small towns to thrive. Following the Conversation, 100% of participants recommended this program for other small towns, and we identified communities who will work one-on-one with our peer mentors to improve or create a studio tour.

If you'd like to see how a studio tour can bring new life to rural communities, check out the spring Toe River Studio Tour that will be held June 7-9th. Over 100 artists and galleries will open their doors to invite the public to "see how it's done." [Click here](#) for more details.

## CONTENTS

**ANNOUNCEMENT**  
Small Town Summit

**UPDATES**  
Studio Tour Workshop Wrap up

**SMALL TOWN UPDATES**  
West Jefferson  
Robbinsville

**UPCOMING EVENTS / NEWS**

**GRANT OPPORTUNITIES**

**EVENTS CALENDAR**

**ON-GOING EVENTS**

## Small Town Updates



### West Jefferson

The Back Street Park Concert Series kicks off on May 31st with Wayne Henderson and Helen White. The popular and free concerts are held from 5:30-7pm every third and fourth Fridays during the summer. Gallery Crawls begin June 14th and are held second Fridays through October. 17 galleries and craft shops are participating this year with four brand new participants. Come see the great progress in downtown, we are excited to report that there are not many vacant spaces left!

### Robbinsville

The US 129 Rodney Orr Bypass in Robbinsville will have a new appearance this summer with streetscape improvements, the construction of pocket parks, and new electronic crosswalks at the primary intersections. They are also constructing traffic islands to slow traffic and make streets more pedestrian-friendly. The parks have benches, waste receptacles and are landscaped with trees, shrubs, perennials and annuals, cared for by the town. Various groups including Beta Sigma Phi, Graham County Chamber of Commerce, Stecoah Valley Center, Graham County Health Department, Edward Jones Investment Services, and the Graham Revitalization Economic Action Team (GREAT) will continue to plant and maintain the parks. The Streetscape Connectivity Plan is in process to connect the streets in downtown Robbinsville with all greenways and streams that go through the town.

---

## Upcoming Events / News



### Essentials of Economic Development

**June 5, 2013**

Does your community have the ingredients to stimulate investment and to create jobs and wealth in an uncertain economy? This one-day workshop covers strategies and tools for promoting economic development in the face of tight budgets and tough economic conditions. The workshop will help participants understand what is required to attract and support private investment in their communities. Participants will examine various economic development strategies and tools and consider how local governments in partnership with the nonprofit and private sectors can help facilitate the process of creating jobs and wealth.

#### Program Topics:

- Overview of Economic Development: Trends and Strategies
- North Carolina Economic Development Toolbox
- Best Practices and Opportunities in Your Region
- NEW this year : An Introduction to the SOG Development Finance Initiative

[Click here](#) for more details.

### Mountain Xpress Best of WNC Poll

**June 5, 2013**

Mountain Xpress Best of WNC Poll is now open! The Regional Category is a great place to recognize assets in your community like:

- Best Local Band
- Best Swimming Hole
- Best Gathering Spot
- Best Restaurant
- Best Art Gallery
- Favorite Local Artist
- Favorite Outdoor Spot
- Favorite Attraction

Feel free to be creative on where you choose to recognize assets in your community, as nominations are often open ended.

[Click here](#) to cast your ballot.

### Local Elected Leaders Academy Scholarship

Scholarship funds are available through the Local Elected Leaders Academy for local elected officials to attend. Please choose your intended location in order to access the scholarship application.

[Click here](#) to register.

For more information, contact 919.843.8176 or [cstowe@sog.unc.edu](mailto:cstowe@sog.unc.edu).

## Grant Opportunities



### Local Sustainability Matching Fund

**Application deadline: May 22, 2013**

The purpose of the Matching Fund is to catalyze partnerships between local government sustainability directors and local, place-based foundations to advance important community-based sustainability initiatives. The Fund invites requests for projects that will assist local governments and funders in implementing a key aspect of an officially adopted sustainability, climate action, or energy efficiency and conservation plan (an officially adopted plan is required). The proposal must be submitted by a team of at least two partners who are: (1) the sustainability director of a city or a county and, (2) the local, place-based foundation. A local place-based foundation may include a community foundation, private foundation that focuses on a greater metropolitan area, or a corporate foundation. [Click here](#) for more details.

### The Bikes Belong Grant Program

**Application deadline: May 24, 2013**

The Bikes Belong Grant Program strives to put more people on bicycles more often by funding projects that leverage federal funding and build momentum for bicycling in communities across the US. These projects include bike paths and rail trails, as well as mountain bike trails, bike parks, BMX facilities, and large-scale bicycle advocacy initiatives. [Click here](#) for more details.

### The Choice Neighborhoods Program

**Application deadline: May 28, 2013**

The Choice Neighborhoods program targets funding to improve severely distressed public and/or HUD-assisted Multifamily housing located in distressed neighborhoods. Planning Grants support the development of comprehensive neighborhood revitalization plans which, when implemented, will be expected to achieve the following three core goals: 1. Housing: Replace distressed public and assisted housing with high-quality mixed-income housing that is well-managed and responsive to the needs of the surrounding neighborhood; 2. People: Improve educational outcomes and intergenerational mobility for youth and supports delivered directly to youth and their families; and 3. Neighborhood: Create the conditions necessary for public and private reinvestment in distressed neighborhoods to offer the kinds of amenities and assets, including safety, good schools, and commercial activity, that are important to families' choices about their community. To achieve these core goals, communities must develop and implement a comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy, or transformation plan. [Click here](#) for more details.

### The Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER)

**Application deadline: June 3, 2013**

Discretionary Grant program provides a unique opportunity for the U.S. Department of Transportation to invest in road, rail, transit, and port projects that promise to achieve critical national objectives. In the FY 2012 round of TIGER Grants, DOT awarded 47 capital projects in 34 states and the District of Columbia. Each project is multi-modal, multi-jurisdictional, or otherwise challenging to fund through existing programs. The TIGER program enables DOT to use a rigorous process to select projects with exceptional benefits, explore ways to deliver projects faster and save on construction costs, and make investments in our Nation's infrastructure that make communities more livable and sustainable. [Click here](#) for more details.

### The Economic Development Administration's (EDA)

**Application deadline: June 13, 2013**

The Economic Development Administration's (EDA) mission is to lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness and preparing American regions for economic growth and success in the worldwide economy. In this program, EDA will make construction, non-construction, and revolving loan fund investments under the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs. Grants made under these programs will leverage regional assets to support the implementation of regional economic development strategies designed to create jobs, leverage private capital, encourage economic development, and strengthen America's ability to compete in the global marketplace. [Click here](#) for more details.

### The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council

**Application deadline: July 15, 2013**

The National Urban and Community Forestry Advisory Council seeks innovative grant proposals for program development, study, and collaboration that will address strategies in the Ten Year Action Plan, specifically addressing the following priority issues: Making urban trees and forests more resilient to natural disasters and climate change, developing green infrastructure jobs analysis, and utilizing green infrastructure to improve stormwater management systems. Organizations, local governments, tribal agencies, and partnerships are encouraged to submit multi-year proposals that demonstrate the reach, resources, and expertise needed to address the priority issues in ways that will lead to meaningful, replicable results across the country. Potential Innovation grantees should work collaboratively with other organizations and entities not traditionally involved in urban and community forestry. [Click here](#) for more details.

## Events Calendar

- 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* (Todd)
- May 25, 7:30pm, *Night of the Spoken Word*, Ashe County Arts Center (West Jefferson)
- May 31-June 1, *North Carolina Gold Festival*, Mountain Gateway Museum (Old Fort) [Click here](#) for more information.
- May 31, *Back Street Park Summer Concerts*, Wayne Henderson & Helen White (West Jefferson) [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)
- West Jefferson Gallery Crawl, Second Fridays through October (West Jefferson)