

Small Towns Newsletter

Upcoming Events

- 9/19 - International Puppet Festival (Todd)
- 9/25 - West Jefferson Backstreet Park Concert
- 9/25 & 10/23 - Andrews Downtown @ Sundown
- 9/26 - ARTS on the Side (West Jefferson)
- 9/26 - A benefit by Irons in the Fire @ Peacock Playhouse (Hayesville)
- 9/26-27 - Bakersville Creek Walk Arts Festival
- 10/2 - Chimney Rock Bingo (1st Fri. of each month)
- 10/2 & 10/16 - Crossnore Jams (1st & 3rd Fridays of the month)
- 10/2-4 - Old Fort Octoberfest
- 10/3 & 11/1 - Andrews Trade Day Swap Meet
- 10/3 - Madison County Heritage Festival (Mars Hill)
- 10/3 - 42nd Annual Bascom Lamar Lunsford "Minstrel of Appalachia" Festival (Mars Hill)
- 10/9 - West Jefferson Gallery Crawl
- 10/9 - Marshall Arts District French Broad Friday
- 10/9-11 - Andrews Annual Chautauqua AVE Cultural Festival
- 10/10 - Todd New River Festival
- 11/5 - Heirloom Seed and Story

A Personal Note

Word travels fast and by now most of you are aware that change will be coming to the Small Towns Program in the months ahead. Over the past year and a half, Geraldine and I have been working on a transition plan for leadership with the Small Towns Program. We have initiated the first steps in transition by sending out a notice and job description for a full-time director for the program. Geraldine hopes to interview and fill this position by the end of the year. I will continue to guide the program and be the point person during a transition period through December. Depending upon the need and available funds, I will continue to work with the program in a supporting role next year. I am confident that the program will grow, strengthen, and prosper under new full-time leadership.

As I reflect back over my almost seven years with HandMade, I find that I am the greatest beneficiary of that time because of my exceptional coworkers, our partners throughout the state and region, and the most wonderful friends and partners in our small towns. Having worked with some of you in my previous career with DCA, our friendships extend much further than my years with HandMade. I thank you all for your friendship, patience, tenacity, hard work, and, of course, partnerships with HandMade, with our funders, and most of all, with each other! As Becky has repeatedly told you, you have set a standard and raised the bar for regional collaborative partnerships in community development that most of you don't even realize. You are special and I am privileged to have had the opportunity to work with you. For the work you have accomplished, HandMade can only claim a partnership and catalytic role, for it is the work in your communities by your citizens that commands the praise of the region and the State.

I want to thank Becky Anderson for giving me the opportunity to work with you, Pat Cabe for doing so much of the work ahead of me, Geraldine Plato for her complete support of our program, Donna Abranches for her financial and program management support, coworkers Megan, Betty,

Swap and Local Food Night (Mars Hill)

11/10 - Fall Cluster Gathering (Old Fort)

11/13 - Fall Cluster Gathering (Marshall)

11/14 - Punkin Chunkin Festival (Hayesville)

11/23-12/30 - Tree Fest (West Jefferson)

In This Issue

Fall Cluster Gatherings Scheduled

STEPs Forward

Workshops and Forums

Carol Kline

Intern Projects

Sharing Ideas

Market and Asset Research

Reminders

Key Websites

[HandMade in America](#)

[NC Rural Center - STEP](#)

[BRNHA](#)

[NCCDI](#)

[Join Our Mailing List!](#)

STEPs Forward

Throughout our region, our communities are busy implementing their NC STEP projects.

West Jefferson



West Jefferson is putting finishing touches on the performance stage and other improvements to the Back Street Park project, located in the center of downtown activity. The park, a central connecting feature between the newly expanded Ashe County Library, the expanded Farmers' Market, and the downtown has been one of the catalysts spurring the development and expansion of new businesses and jobs on the recently renamed Back Street.

Image: Back Street Park stage.

Todd



The Todd community has completed a successful summer music series, with the program on August 11th featuring Doc

Jenny, Norma, and Janiece for their partnership and support, and most of all, thanks to all of you for welcoming us into your communities.

Fall Cluster Gathering Scheduled

Please mark your calendars for our fall Cluster Gatherings! This fall we will be holding these events in Old Fort and Marshall, the first time hosting for both communities. **The gathering for Crossnore, Bakersville, Todd, West Jefferson, and Old Fort will be held on Tuesday, November 10th at the Train Depot on Main Street in downtown Old Fort from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm.**

The gathering for Chimney Rock, Mars Hill, Hot Springs, Bryson City, Andrews, Hayesville, and Marshall will be held at the Arts Council offices on Main Street in downtown Marshall on, yes, Friday, November 13th!

You all know the routine, 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!

Watson. Todd's Liberty Parade on the 4th of July had a group of visitors from Andrews looking to bring a similar event to Andrews. The summer and fall tourism special events will conclude in October with the new River Festival. After the festival, activities for the late fall and winter will move indoors to the Todd Mercantile and Todd General Store.

Image: Todd Liberty parade.

Bakersville



The Bakersville community has made great progress on its long standing and original Small Towns project, the rehabilitation and reuse of the old Mitchell County Court House. Interior and exterior rehabilitation continue as the community secures, matches, and leverages grants and community resources to put this magnificent icon and resource for Bakersville and Mitchell County back to use. The court house will be a "green project" with geothermal heating and cooling, and Bakersville intends to apply for LEED certification.

Image: Bakersville Court House.

Crossnore



Crossnore has completed most of their STEP projects; they focused on improving signage for the community, way-finding signage within the community, and improvements to the welcome center facilities at the Community Meeting House. Additional improvements to the Town's electronic capacity and website development have also been completed.

Image: Crossnore town sign.

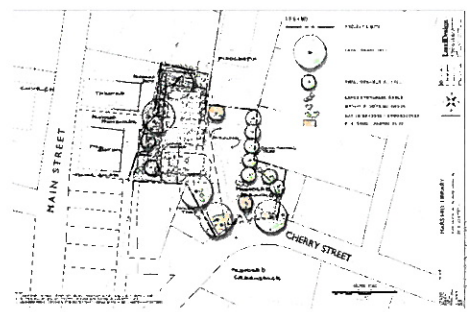
Chimney Rock



Chimney Rock has completed repairs and improvements to its River Walk and is preparing to initiate work on the first phase of an outdoor performance venue. Chimney Rock has been visiting performance venues in Old Fort and around the region and has offered to host others who want to visit their River Walk for ideas and guidance on their projects.

Image: Vista from Chimney Rock's outdoor performance venue.

Mars Hill



Mars Hill has completed their project, a design charrette for their central commercial area. Combined with work from an intern, Andy Cole, provided by our partners at LandDesign, Mars Hill is embarking on implementation of some of the projects and concepts identified in the charrette. Mars Hill is also one of the towns participating in a marketing research project being undertaken by HandMade in partnership with the Rural Center (see article below).

Image: Library landscape plan, Andy Cole, LandDesign.

Bryson City



A visit to downtown Bryson City provides a view of the streetscape improvements that have been added and enhanced with Bryson City's STEP funds. Bryson City has completed portions of its overall streetscape plan with STEP and City funding. Lighting, crosswalks, furniture, and sidewalk improvements provide increased access and ambiance to Main, Mitchell, and Everett Streets in downtown. These improvements support access to and from existing and future improvements to the Smoky Mountain Railroad and the rest of downtown.

Image: Bryson City streetscape improvements.

Hayesville



The Hayesville community, in partnership with CCCRA and others, is working on the initial phases of the Nelson Heritage Park project. STEP funding is being matched with several other sources, including the Cherokee Preservation Foundation, Conservation Fund, the school system, and a host of volunteers, including Tighe White Construction Company. The Cherokee winter house is complete and the retaining wall mural display is partially complete. Other projects include the ongoing work to restore the old Clay County Court House and the possible expansion of the recently completed 15 mile Jackrabbit Mountain Bike Trail.

Image: Cherokee Winter House.

Old Fort and Andrews

Our two newest STEP communities are moving forward with their planning. Old Fort has completed their planning process and initiated some of their projects earlier this summer. Andrews is working on developing their work plan and projects and we hope to have them underway soon.

Workshops and Forums

Rural Partners Forum

The NC Rural Center's annual Rural Forum will be held in Raleigh on November 5th and 6th. We would like to encourage representatives of our communities to attend and support this special Rural Center event. We will be able to provide some financial support for a limited number of representatives from our STEP Cluster communities to attend. Please let David know if you are interested in attending and would like financial assistance.

NC STEP Grant Writing Workshop

The STEP program will be holding regional grant writing workshops for all STEP communities this fall and winter. The first session of the workshop will be held in our region on October 13th at the Depot in downtown Marion, followed by a 1.5 day session on December 2nd and 3rd, also to be held at the Depot in Marion. Details on this workshop series will be announced later this month. We can provide financial resources to cover your travel expenses for this workshop.

Community Capitals Project



Hi! Remember me? The pesky one who came to your town asking questions about HandMade? The research project continues and I will be

winding up my town visits on October 2nd when I get to visit Chimney Rock. Meanwhile, if you haven't completed the online survey about HandMade and community capitals, please do! Your perspective on the community development, tourism, and entrepreneurial climate in your community is critical to setting a course for the next decade of programs...

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=BV_2fqY9dDnu2e9zytgu.AHBQ_3d_3d

And please forward the link to your western North Carolina neighbors, colleagues, and friends, even if they live outside the "small town" you are in. We need as much input as possible to gain an accurate snapshot of the region.

Note: For an interesting take on who might be moving to small towns see:
<http://www.ers.usda.gov/AmberWaves/September09/Features/BabyBoom.htm>.

Image: Carol Kline

Intern Projects

Thanks to our outstanding partners at DCA and LandDesign, we were able to place two excellent interns in four of our communities. Karen Smith and Ginny Faust at DCA were able to secure Andrew Campbell, a student from NCSU, to work with Bakersville and Andrews. We also extend a special thanks to local Asheville architect Terry Meek, AIA, NCARB, who provided pro bono services to Andrews and partnered with Andrew to develop a wonderful gateway project for the downtown. Andrew also worked with Bakersville to develop a landscape plan for the Mitchell County Court House rehabilitation and reuse project.

Stephanie Pankiewicz, RLA, ASLA, a principal with LandDesign, provided pro bono services from their intern, Andy Cole, from Purdue University. Andy prepared a complete landscape design for the new public library in Mars Hill, including additional pedestrian access and connections that tied-in with the community's design charrette for the downtown. Andy's other project involved working with design elements for Crossnore's comprehensive trails program.

We anticipate that many of the project elements and designs will be adopted, adapted, and implemented by the communities. Thank you to our partners at DCA and LandDesign for providing these "extra" resources and opportunities to our communities and to the interns. A special thanks to Terry Meek, of Edwin Terrel Meek Architect in Asheville, for his work with Andrew and Andrews! We welcome and will try and utilize those who wish to serve and provide resources for our wonderful small towns.



*Andrews Gateway Initiative Project
 Edwin Terrel Meek Architect*

Sharing Ideas

Todd and Andrews

After seeing photos and hearing stories and descriptions of the Liberty Parade in Todd, members of the Andrews community traveled to Todd this past 4th of July to experience this

excellent community event. Interaction, communication, and sharing are some of our greatest assets as a program.

Old Fort and Chimney Rock

Chimney Rock is embarking on the development of an outdoor theatre to provide a venue for the community, visitors, and special events. To gather ideas and potential resources, a delegation from Chimney Rock visited the outdoor theatre in Old Fort. In return, Chimney Rock invited Old Fort to visit their River Walk as the Old Fort community begins planning and designing a creek walk along Mill Creek. Old Fort has also visited Bakersville's Creek Walk.

More Communication

We continue to encourage you to reach out by phone, e-mail, and site visits to other communities in order to learn and share what you and your partner communities have and are accomplishing. As well as learning what to do, many communities have acquired "lessons learned" on what not to do. Creek walks, parks, court houses, performance spaces, tailgate and farmers markets, website development, special events.... Find out what others are doing by picking up the phone, going online, or getting in the car!

Market and Asset Research

Thanks to a grant from the NC Rural Center to our Craft, Architecture and Design program, HandMade is providing market and asset research to four of our Small Towns: Mars Hill, Old Fort, Bakersville, and Hayesville. The purpose of the research is to create new jobs or preserve existing jobs (not necessarily craft jobs) in those communities. In each of the towns, committees of volunteers are working with a consultant and Jenny Moore from HandMade to determine what kind of information will most benefit that town economically. In Mars Hill, the Economic Vision Committee is working with Glen Locascio from DCA; in Old Fort, a subcommittee of the Old Fort Mountain Heritage Alliance is working with Dean Kanipe; in Bakersville, BIG is working with Smithson Mills; and in Hayesville, CCCRA will be working with Kristy Carter from DCA. We hope this work will lead to a model that can be used in other communities.

Reminders

Photos

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

Events

Our communities develop and produce creative, diverse and entertaining activities throughout the region. Please continue to send us your upcoming events so we can publicize them on our HandMade events calendar. We look forward to making our HandMade calendar a regional marketing opportunity.

Assessment Reports

Please remember to send your Impact Assessment Report forms and Quarterly Reports to Donna (dabranches@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 November at the Cluster Gatherings!

Sincerely,

David Quinn
HandMade in America
dquinn@handmadeinamerica.org
(828) 252-0121

Forward email

 **SafeUnsubscribe®**

This email was sent to erinelder@handmadeinamerica.org by
dquinn@handmadeinamerica.org.

[Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

Email Marketing by



HandMade in America | PO Box 2089 | Asheville | NC | 28802