

THE MAGAZINE OF YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE | FALL/WINTER 2013

ECHOES

MOUNTAIN MAGIC

Unlocking the secrets of
the Enchanted Valley

8 BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

12 TRUE TRAILBLAZERS

28 THE NATURE OF ART

50 MAKING A MOVE



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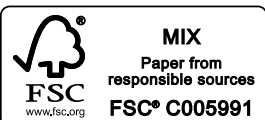
Jay Stroman

CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Brantley Barrow, '74

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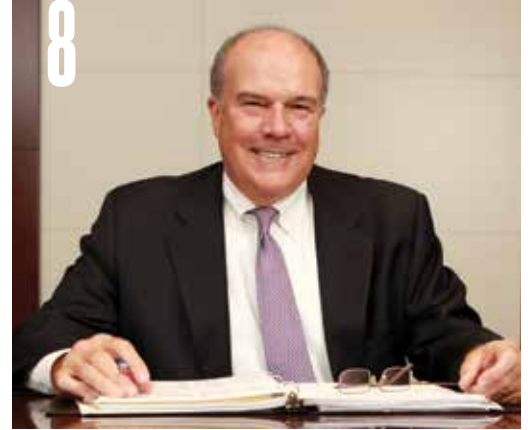
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ON THE COVER

Young Harris College junior outdoor leadership major Hunter Good, of Sharpsburg, is used to plunging into the lakes and streams surrounding campus. To document his adventures, the YHC Photography Club president often takes along a GoPro underwater camera. Good braved chilly waters to capture the view from underneath Corn Creek near Cupid Falls depicted on the cover.

▶ Watch the cover photo shoot.



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Valley View

Dear YHC Family:

If I asked you to describe what most distinguishes Young Harris College from every other campus you can think of, what would you say?

We went through that exercise over the past couple of years as part of our four-year transition, especially as we evaluated our logo and other identifying marks that were being used to define us to prospective students and to the world at large. We asked ourselves, “What is distinctive about our campus?”

In answering these questions, we were rightfully proud of our United Methodist heritage, but there are another 99 or so Methodist colleges around the country. We have fabulous faculty and small classes, but a lot of schools brag about the same thing. We went through a number of our quality indicators, but noted that other colleges right here in Georgia also claimed some of the same ones.

But when we considered the mountains, no one could compete.

Zell Miller, '51, described how much the mountains and valleys of this region had to do with the formation of YHC some 127 years ago in his book “The Miracle of Brasstown Valley.” He noted that Georgia has eight mountain peaks over 4,000 feet in height, five of which surround the YHC campus. And truly, if you ask anyone who knows anything about our College to describe it, there's a very good chance they'll say something about the mountains.

Our environment really does define and distinguish our campus in so many ways. So, we have attempted to use that incredibly strong and positive force to make sure prospective students—and indeed the larger world—know how connected we are to the mountains and to this Enchanted Valley.

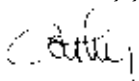
We incorporated a soft mountain ridge into our logo. We are building all new campus facilities with larger windows and more porches to make sure students have ample opportunities to see and be inspired by their beautiful surroundings all day and all night.

In this issue of *Echoes*, we highlight alumni who practice what they preach and have taken a love of the environment into their careers. We're also featuring our unique and growing outdoor leadership major, which is unlike any other degree program in Georgia! We're bringing you up close and personal with some of our faculty who help inspire students to see and study the world around them in more intimate ways.

Artemas Lester, the Methodist circuit-riding minister who founded Young Harris, “did not need a book to tell him he was in a special place in God's great universe,” wrote Zell Miller. And the same spectacular vistas that captured the heart and soul of Artemas Lester when he crested the ridge on a pack mule more than a century ago continue to capture the hearts and souls of YHC students, faculty, alumni—and presidents like me—even today.

You know what I'm talking about! Take a deep breath, bring to mind your favorite view of the mountains and enjoy this issue. Come back to campus soon.

Sincerely yours,



Cathy Cox
President



ABOVE YHC senior biology major and 2012-2013 Student Government Association President Ashley Cross, of Murphy, N.C., helped President Cox break ground on the new \$41 million, 125,000-square-foot Rollins Campus Center in April. **BELOW** President Cox congratulated Brad Rutherford, '13, of Lavonia, (left) and Matthew Peeler, '13, of Williamson, on their second-place finish in the Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship that was hosted by the College in August.

DR. KARYNNE KLEINE TO Lead Division of Education

Karynne Kleine, Ed.D., has been named dean of YHC's Division of Education. She also serves as professor of education and heads up the College's Teacher Preparation Program.



Dr. Kleine earned her B.S. in business management from San Diego State University, her M.Ed. in middle level education from the University of Maine, and her Ed.D. in history, philosophy of science and science education from the University of Maine. She previously served as professor of education at Georgia College and State University.

"YHC provides many opportunities for innovation in the field of education," said Dr. Kleine. "It's apparent that the goal is to educate students, not merely graduate them. I'm thrilled to join the faculty and promote a vision of improving our world through enhanced educational outcomes for all."

YHC BREAKS ENROLLMENT RECORDS

For the seventh consecutive year, YHC broke overall enrollment records in Fall 2013 with **1,122 students** on campus. The College also welcomed its largest-ever entering class comprised of **464 freshmen**. Since the College's transition to a four-year institution began in 2006, total enrollment has increased by **86 percent**.



YHC ADDS NEW Living and Learning Spaces

In August, YHC opened The Towers residence hall that provides an additional 226 beds for incoming freshmen. The facility is configured in "pods," or small communities consisting of students living in different sizes and styles of rooms surrounding a country-club-style bath area.

The innovative pod concept provides living and learning spaces that encourage student interaction and foster a sense of community during formative semesters. The housing, which is expected to earn Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification, features large and inviting study alcoves and lounges.

Additionally, the "Old Brown Store" located on the corner of Highway 76 and Maple Street was recently renovated to include four mathematics classrooms, faculty offices, a conference room and a student work area.

YHC BREAKS GROUND ON Rollins Campus Center

In April, YHC broke ground on the new \$41 million, 125,000-square-foot Rollins Campus Center, the largest building ever to be constructed at Young Harris that is designed to catapult the student experience into the 21st century.

The new social and intellectual heart of campus is the centerpiece of YHC's master plan and the focal point of the *Investing in the Future* Capital Campaign. In March 2012, YHC announced a \$22 million gift from the Atlanta-based O. Wayne Rollins Foundation that served as the lead gift for the facility.

During the ceremony, YHC President Cathy Cox acknowledged representatives from the building's general contractor, Atlanta-based Choate Construction Company, as well as project manager Brailsford & Dunlavy and architect VMDO. She also recognized the dedicated efforts of YHC Capital Campaign Chair and trustee Pam Rollins.

The Rollins family has been an integral part of the history and growth of YHC for more than four decades. O. Wayne Rollins joined the Board of Trustees in 1970 and addressed the College's needs with generous support and leadership. His granddaughter, Pam, has followed in his footsteps during her 20-year tenure as a trustee.

"We are so excited to be a part of this signature facility," said Rollins. "My grandfather loved this College, and I have come to love YHC as well. This is one of the greatest things we could give back to the campus in his honor."

The new 60,000-square-foot, multi-purpose student center includes space for student organizations, activities and services in the versatile third-floor Mary Warren Loft. It will include lounge areas, informal meeting spaces and computer workstations.

The 500-plus seating in the future Grace Rollins Dining Hall will replace the College's current 270-seat space. Food stations will feature healthy, customized made-to-order meals and grab-and-go options.

The elegant 350-seat Charles Suber Banquet Hall will enable the College to host large group gatherings, guest lectures and workshops. The space will feature a sound system, retractable screen and portable stage, and will be available for rental.

The 40,000-square-foot library will be named for former U.S. Senator and Georgia Governor Zell Miller, '51, and his wife, Shirley, '54. The state-of-the-art facility will feature permanent and special collections, study rooms, reading carrels, computer stations, and a 24-hour study area.

The glass, brick and stone facility will boast many sustainable features, including the use of geothermal wells, and is expected to earn Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification.



\$2 MILLION GRANT AWARDED TO YHC TO ENHANCE CAMPUS TECHNOLOGY

The College was recently awarded a \$2 million Title III Strengthening Institutions Program grant by the U.S. Department of Education to improve student success. YHC was one of only 39 schools—and the only institution in Georgia—selected as a recipient for this cycle. The grant will help YHC create a new Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and fund technology upgrades for 26 classrooms and nine laboratories. The College will also implement lecture capture software and portable interactive response systems. Server technology will be replaced to meet today's software demands while allowing for future utilization of virtual technology.

YHC NAMED "COLLEGE OF DISTINCTION"

YHC has been named to the prestigious "Colleges of Distinction" for the third consecutive year for providing students with the best learning experiences in undergraduate education. Fewer than 300 colleges and universities from across the country and only eight in Georgia earned the honor in 2013-2014.





CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT President Cathy Cox presented Jerry Nix with the Young Harris College Medallion. ■ Commencement speaker Monica Pearson addressed the graduates. ■ Kelsey Battle, of Douglasville, showed off her diploma. ■ Faculty congratulated graduate Sam Walker, of Epping, England, after the ceremony. ■ Representatives from the Class of 1963, pictured here with President Cathy Cox (center), marched with the 2013 graduates in recognition of the 50th anniversary of their own YHC graduation.

“While you may see this ceremony as an end, it is actually a beginning.” These were the words of retired veteran Atlanta-based television journalist and broadcaster Monica Pearson, who addressed 146 graduates during Young Harris College’s Commencement ceremony on May 4 in the Recreation and Fitness Center.

Members of the Class of 2013 were also encouraged to “aim high, reach for the stars and change the world” by Pearson, who received an honorary doctor of public service degree from YHC President Cathy Cox during the ceremony.

The Young Harris College Medallion, the highest honor bestowed by YHC to alumni and friends who have made extraordinary contributions, was awarded to Jerry Nix in recognition of his leadership as the College’s Board of Trustees chair through possibly the greatest transformation in its 127-year history. Nix recently retired from his position as executive vice president and chief financial officer of the Atlanta-based Genuine Parts Company.

President Cox presented the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award to Wezly Barnard, of Boksburg, South Africa, and the Mary Mildred Sullivan Award to Mary Beth Maxwell, of Carrollton. Created nearly a century ago to honor the service leadership of their namesakes, the awards are given annually by the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Foundation to individuals whose nobility of character and dedication to service sets them apart as examples for others.

The Dr. Charles R. Clegg Outstanding Scholar Award, which recognizes graduating seniors with the overall highest grade point average, was presented to Ian Calhoun, of Young Harris, and Connie Wallace, of Hiawassee. Emalyn Cork, of Marietta, was presented the Zell B. Miller Leadership Award for significant contributions to campus life at YHC as an outstanding leader and role model. Matt Wilmer, of Loganville, received the Young Harris Spirit Award for demonstrating personal integrity, friendliness and engagement with the campus community.

After walking across the stage and turning their tassels, the Class of 2013 recessed through a line of faculty members who applauded, hugged and congratulated them. The graduates then met with family and friends, posing for photos and savoring the moment before beginning new adventures as YHC alumni.





LEFT TO RIGHT Sarah Deese, of Roswell, chatted with YHC alumnus and former U.S. Senator and Georgia Governor Zell Miller, ‘51, at the annual Baccalaureate Service on May 3. ■ Graduates and their families gathered for the traditional Vespers Service atop Brasstown Bald on May 2. ■ JeRee Dukes, of Lincolnton, received her graduation stole and Bible from YHC Staff Accompanist Anita Guss.

GRADUATES ENJOY SYMBOLIC SPIRITUAL SERVICES

Graduates gathered at the top of Brasstown Bald for the annual Vespers Service on May 2. Many students participated in the seven-mile hike up Bald Mountain before joining others to share in a meal catered by Atlanta’s world-famous drive-in The Varsity. Following a sermon by Dean of the Chapel and Minister to the College Rev. Dr. Tim Moore, titled “Holy Ground,” graduates released environmentally friendly balloons into the foggy sky over the Enchanted Valley.

On the eve of the Commencement ceremony, 131 seniors gathered to share in worship during the annual Baccalaureate Service. Rev. Dr. Lawrence E. Carter, Sr., who serves as dean of the chapel, professor of religion and college curator at Morehouse College, delivered an inspirational message to the students. The ceremony also included a senior class prayer, the ceremonial presentation of purple stoles to the graduates by special mentors and the distribution of a Bible to each senior as a reminder of the College’s spiritual heritage.

 View more photos of the Commencement festivities @ [flickr.com/youngharriscollege](https://www.flickr.com/photos/youngharriscollege/).
 Find out more about the Class of 2013 @ yhc.edu/seniors.

 Watch highlights from the ceremony.





“
Sustainability and
preservation of
the environment
are important to the
younger generation.
..... ”

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT DEAN

Building a Sustainable Future

BY JUDY LUNSFORD

BRANTLEY BARROW, '74, HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN SHAPING THE LANDSCAPE OF YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE FOR THE LAST FIVE YEARS. HE ACCOMPLISHED IT WITH THE HEART OF AN ALUMNUS, THE COMMITMENT OF A TRUSTEE AND THE EXPERTISE OF A BUSINESS EXECUTIVE WITH 34 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE IN THE CONSTRUCTION INDUSTRY.

With the College's enrollment nearly doubling since 2007, three new housing complexes and a 57,000-square-foot Recreation and Fitness Center were constructed to accommodate the rapid growth. Designed to serve the needs of students, each facility has also been built to meet or exceed Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards.

"This represents a commitment by the client to the environment and sustainability," said Barrow, a national leader in sustainable construction who served as the contractor for the four facilities. "The selection of renewable and recycled materials, the use of energy-efficient systems, and even the architecture that brings natural light into the building are part of what determines if a project will be LEED certified."

When the 62,500-square-foot, 200-bed Enotah Hall opened in 2009, it was the first higher education facility in north Georgia to achieve LEED Silver certification. The Recreation and Fitness Center and The Village upperclassmen apartment complex both earned LEED certification, and the College's newest residence hall, The Towers, is expected to follow suit.

"It's important that we tell students about our LEED-certified projects," said Barrow, who was recently elected chair of the College's Board of Trustees after dedicating nearly a decade to the group. "Sustainability and preservation of the environment are important to the younger generation."

The campus looked quite different in the fall of 1972 when Barrow arrived as a freshman, following in the footsteps of his father, Bobby Barrow, '50, and uncle, Dr. James H. Barrow, '41.

An "above-average" student at Columbus High School, Barrow was accepted to several colleges and universities. The combination of a full scholarship, encouragement from family members and frequent visits to campus made YHC the clear choice.

"It was absolutely the best decision I could have ever made," Barrow said with a broad smile. "Back then, it was a hard drive to Young Harris over the mountains. Once you got up there, you didn't shoot home every weekend. And that was great because you had to adapt and make friends."

He spent a lot of time outdoors playing football against rival fraternities, hiking, hunting, camping and, of course, visiting Cupid Falls. He found camaraderie among his Phi Chi fraternity brothers that developed into lifelong friendships.

"You really bonded with people because there wasn't much to do. You had to create your own fun," Barrow explained. One of his proudest moments at YHC occurred when his fraternity won the intramural football championship.


"With only a minute remaining, we used a trick play called the 'muddle huddle' to score the winning touchdown against the KTOs," said Barrow. "The alumni who returned to watch the game were especially excited with our win since the KTOs had consistently won the championship in prior years."

When Barrow was tasked with building new housing that would complement the existing campus community, he called to mind his residential experience.

"The campus is and has always been beautiful," said Barrow, who fondly recollected seeing Appleby Center covered with spirited signs and banners. "But back in the day, Winship Hall had these concrete block walls. Student housing is so much better now."

Barrow continued his studies at the University of Georgia (UGA), and attributes his success there to his time at YHC. "The fervor with which my professors taught was remarkable. They made you want to learn," he said. "Students had the opportunity to really know professors due to the small class sizes. That's not something you get at a large university."

While he had "a heck of a lot of fun" at YHC, he also matured into a confident young adult. "I entered UGA as a



Brantley Barrow and
his wife, Sharon

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT DEAN

very serious student intent on finishing school and starting a career,” he said. One auspicious accounting course determined his future path.

“My professor was a CPA and always talked about what a great profession that was,” he recalled. “I wasn’t sure about accounting at first, but then it clicked. It’s one of those fields where you either get it or you don’t.” And Barrow definitely got it.

He excelled at his studies and received his bachelor of business administration degree summa cum laude from UGA in 1976. He joined one of the most prestigious accounting firms at that time, Arthur Andersen LLP, as a staff auditor.

Barrow’s clients were spread across Georgia, keeping him on the road for weeks at a time. Feeling the pull to be home more often, he requested the company assign him a client in Atlanta. Enter Hardin Construction Company, LLC.

Founded in 1946 to build quality, affordable housing for veterans returning from World War II, the privately held company moved from housing to commercial construction over the years. The firm’s portfolio of projects—high-rise office buildings, hotels, convention centers, retail complexes, airport terminals, and educational and special-use facilities—is evidenced in skylines across the United States, Puerto Rico, Mexico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

“I never thought I would end up in the construction industry,” chuckled Barrow, who coincidentally worked construction during the summers while in college. “But that’s the good thing about public accounting. When you work for a firm like Arthur Andersen, you have the opportunity to learn about a variety of businesses.”

Barrow described accounting as “the language of business,” noting that auditors learn how a company makes a profit, what causes a loss and how everything works together. By studying Hardin’s financial records, visiting construction sites, and working with the managers and administrators, Barrow learned the financial operations of the company.

After his second year auditing Hardin, executives invited Barrow to join the firm as controller. His financial expertise and business acumen moved him up the corporate ladder. He was promoted to vice president and controller in 1985, moving to vice president of finance three years later.

When the Hardin family decided to sell the company in 1993, Barrow became one of the minority owners. In 2007, when the majority owner decided to retire, he and two other partners acquired the firm. Under his leadership as chair, the company continued to grow as a leader in “green,” sustainable building and became nationally recognized for its safety practices.

When the first LEED-certified office building was constructed in the Southeast in the early 2000s, Barrow took notice. “The building was really a client-driven exercise,” he explained. “But, I said, ‘Hey, this is where the industry is going to go.’”

Hardin ensured that dozens of employees became LEED certified so that they could talk with clients about incorporating LEED standards into their building projects. “You have to have a client’s buy-in because it’s a lot more expensive, especially if you are going for Gold certification,” Barrow explained, noting the 10-percent upscale construction cost.

In April 2013, Barrow and his partners sold the Atlanta-based construction company to California-based DPR Construction, a national builder that specializes in technical and sustainable projects.

“It was a great fit for both companies,” said Barrow, who has served as a consultant on some hospitality projects during the transition. “DPR’s portfolio is a ‘who’s who’ among modern businesses. They saw Hardin as an opportunity to get a foothold in the Southeast. We do different work than them, such as hotel construction, which offered some diversification.”

Stepping down from the day-to-day corporate world has freed up Barrow’s schedule to pursue other interests and enjoy more time with his wife, Sharon, and their children, Brant and Rebecca—both fellow UGA graduates and Atlanta residents.

With college football in high gear, Barrow said he has every Saturday scheduled. “We never miss a UGA game, no matter where it is,” he said. “We are avid tailgaters. We have parked in the same spot for the last 15 years. We bring our food instead of taking a grill, but we know who to visit for great grilling.”

Travel is also on his agenda for 2014. At least one trip will be overseas thanks to Brant, who followed in his father’s footsteps as a CPA and will soon move from his firm’s Atlanta location to their Italy office. “Sharon may have already bought the tickets,” he said.

Traveling to Napa Valley, studying Civil War history, enjoying bass fishing and playing tennis are all on Barrow’s to-do list. He also has another significant list prepared—his many commitments to nonprofit and educational organizations.

In addition to his new role on the Board of Trustees at YHC, Barrow serves as chair of the March of Dimes Georgia Chapter, chair-elect of Habitat for Humanity’s Atlanta chapter and chair of UGA’s Terry College of Business Alumni Association.

“In a perfect world, I would just like to work for some nonprofits,” Barrow said. “I don’t want any pay for it. I just want to work with them.”

Barrow joined YHC’s Board of Trustees in 2004, a critical time in the College’s history when the group was beginning to deliberate the future direction of the institution. “It was clear that everyone had the best interest of Young Harris at heart,” he recalled. “Everyone was committed to its future. That was pretty impressive.”

One of Barrow’s first assignments was reviewing the College’s

admissions and retention figures. “We realized we had to make a change,” he said. So began the first discussions about becoming a four-year institution. “That decision has been great for the College,” said Barrow, “and Cathy Cox has been a great president to lead us through this transition.”

These days, Barrow sees the evidence of his commitment as an alumnus, trustee and former construction company chairman who helped shape the landscape—literally—of YHC when he frequents the campus in the familiar foothills of the north Georgia mountains.

“During my first year at YHC, one of the most impressive things I experienced was the way the alumni returned to campus constantly. Only after I left did I learn why,” said Barrow. “You truly miss the campus, the surrounding mountains and, most importantly, the friends you made there.” ■

.....
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.....

Barrow stands in front of The Towers, one of the four new facilities on the YHC campus that he served as contractor for through Hardin Construction Company, LLC.




PHOTOGRAPH BY LEANN WALDROUP

TRUE TRAILBLAZERS

BY KRYSTIN DEAN

There is something magical about the mountains. A college campus located in the middle of them creates an ideal learning environment in an idyllic natural setting. This inimitable combination has led countless Young Harris College graduates to embark on exciting—and often unexpected—career paths. The six adventurous alumni profiled in the pages ahead pursued their passion for the great outdoors and never looked back. For them, taking the road less traveled really has made all the difference.

A photograph of a man with a beard and sunglasses on his head, wearing a grey t-shirt and a blue backpack, sitting in a blue kayak on a river. He is looking down at a map or document he is holding. The river is surrounded by dense green trees and foliage, with reflections visible in the water. A white paddle is visible in the water next to the kayak.

Ryan floated along the Black River in North Carolina, monitoring some of the 14,000 acres The Nature Conservancy has acquired through the years.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOEL METCALFE, '96



DAN RYAN, '97
Longleaf Pine Whole System Director
at The Nature Conservancy
Wilmington, N.C.

Young Harris College left an indelible impression on Dan Ryan, '97, not only because of the lifelong friendships he made, but also the lasting education he received both inside the classroom and the natural laboratories surrounding the campus.

"YHC is special because of its obvious beauty and also because it allows you to walk into the woods on an adventure that could last an afternoon or a week," said Ryan, whose passion for nature blossomed in the southern Blue Ridge Mountains.

"Backpacking trips and family vacations in the area gave it a very special allure to me," he explained. "The fact that there was a college located in the midst of where I felt such happiness was reason alone to attend YHC."

When Ryan made the move to Young Harris from his hometown of Atlanta in 1995, most of his free time was spent hiking trails near the College.

He spent two consecutive spring breaks getting dropped off at different spots on the Appalachian Trail with classmates, backpacking up to Brasstown Bald and down the Old Wagon Trail back to campus feeling "victorious—and not quite ready to start classes again."

Having learning environments like the Chattahoochee National Forest so accessible did liven up Ryan's science courses, providing outstanding examples of nature at its finest.

"That these places existed really prompted me to want to surround myself in work that aimed to protect more of it," he said. "YHC was the first place I began to understand in detail how ecosystems function and that every plant and animal provides a small role in the greater web of life."

Ryan furthered his education by earning an environmental studies degree from the University of North Carolina at Asheville and a master of public administration degree from the University of North Carolina at Wilmington.

He met his wife, Sylvia, while volunteering for the Peace Corps in Bolivia, and the pair lives in Wilmington, N.C., with their 3-year-old daughter, Soledad. After working with local land trusts in California and North Carolina, Ryan joined The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in 2007 as the longleaf pine whole system director.

"Variety is the constant in my job," he explained. "More often than not I am desk-bound writing grants or implementing strategies and partnerships in moving conservation forward, but I do spend the rare day outside meeting with a landowner or participating in a controlled burn."

The team of six Ryan manages also strives to build community awareness regarding how nature benefits people on a daily basis—like the role it plays in providing clean water. His ultimate goal is simple and substantial: "to make a lasting impact in the surrounding area."

Ryan still spends time outdoors whenever he can, taking in the beauty of the land he works to protect on a daily basis. His top TNC sanctuary is the tea-colored Black River Cypress Preserve that is characterized by artesian springs and mature swamp forests.

"There is a primordial feeling as you float by 2,000-year-old cypress trees in a kayak," he said. "It truly is something everyone should experience."

If you ask Zach Thompson, '12, about the best way to spend time outdoors around Young Harris College, he can't pick just one. Rock climbing, hiking, playing Frisbee on the campus lawn and visiting Cupid Falls all rank high on his list, but one pursuit stands out among the rest.

"I really fell in love with the sport of kayaking during my junior year," said Thompson, who tested his prowess on the nearby Nantahala and Cartecay rivers before moving on to more challenging rapids like the Ocoee and Chattooga.

The crystal-clear Tellico River that boasts spectacular scenery in the Unicoi Range near the Tennessee-North Carolina border is Thompson's favorite spot to paddle. He recalled feeling "truly one with the river" after successfully descending the 15-foot Baby Falls and 25-foot Bald River Falls for the first time.

"Looking down into a white foamy pit of water, I was free, alive, scared and then a champion on top of the world as I emerged from the depths of the chilly water," he said. "The feeling was one of complete serenity. That was a perfect day—the climax of my kayaking life during my time at YHC."

Thompson described the College as a place where "lifelong friendships are made, spouses are found and professor-student relationships continue to grow after graduation." The Cartersville native loved the atmosphere so much that he decided to stay in the area with his fiancé and YHC alumna Savannah Jones, '10.

"Everyone calls Young Harris the Enchanted Valley for good reason. Everything about the campus and this region makes for a wonderful experience," he said. "Our mountains are mystical, mysterious and marvelous. The foothills, valleys and hollers are the key ingredients to the perfect recipe for a home away from home."

Thompson has served as the youth minister at First United Methodist Church of Union County in Blairsville since 2012—an unexpected career choice for an outdoor leadership graduate, but one that allows him to regularly use what he learned during his studies.

"My degree taught me to work with others effectively, solve problems, be a leader when I need to be—and be a follower as well," he explained. "At YHC, I also learned about spirituality in nature. Many people can understand the sense of spirituality one gets while in the wilderness. I feel most connected to my faith when I'm immersed in God's creation."

Thompson was highly involved in religious life on campus. He was a member of the Alpha Omega fraternity and vice president of the Inter-Religious Council, and he often spoke during meetings of the "Underground" Bible study as well as the College's annual Spiritual Life Retreat.

He first developed an affinity for working with youth while taking part in a pilot course called "Processing the Experience" that allowed outdoor leadership majors to select, plan and lead weekly adventure activities for elementary and middle school students in a local after-school program.

"That experience helped me learn how to deal with younger students in a more effective way," said Thompson. "Our research enabled us to look at how they are able to demonstrate leadership skills, build trust with peers, learn effective communication skills and build self esteem."

Today, he strives to share his love and compassion for nature as he leads the Methodist Youth Fellowship and a weekly Bible study. During the summer, he enjoys taking his youth group on day hikes, weekend backpacking excursions and whitewater rafting trips.

"Young Harris is a special and unique place because the area attracts special and unique people," Thompson said. "We don't mind saying hello to a complete stranger, we don't mind a little slower pace of life and we don't mind giving a helping hand when one is needed."

ZACH THOMPSON, '12

Youth Minister at First United
Methodist Church of Union County
Blairsville, Ga.



TRUE TRAILBLAZERS



Thompson led a Bible study atop Bell Mountain with youth group members from First United Methodist Church of Union County.

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT DEAN



LEFT TO RIGHT Holland climbed the summit of Pinnacle Rock in Cullowhee, N.C., and rappelled from the second pitch on Table Rock in the Linville Gorge Wilderness, often dubbed the "Grand Canyon of North Carolina."

PHOTOGRAPH BY MORGAN MCCOOL

NATALIE HOLLAND, '08
 Mountaineering Staff at the Asheville
 School; Director of Student Work Study
 Programs at Montreat College
 Asheville, N.C.



PHOTOGRAPH BY MISTY VARNELL

Natalie Holland, '08, is a climber by nature. Whether scaling a steep mountain peak or climbing the rungs of her life goals, she treads toward the top one sure step at a time.

"From the moment I set foot on campus, I knew that Young Harris College was the perfect school for me," she recalled. "There is something truly remarkable about not only the location, but also just the feel when you enter the campus."

Holland hit the ground running—literally—when she came to YHC in 2006. A true trailblazer, she was the first student-athlete to sign for the College's newly established women's cross country team.

Each morning, she was inspired by the "perfect view" of the mountains from her window in Appleby Center. She logged many memorable hours on the lawn, setting up a slack line or hammock and spending time with friends.

"I always found adventures, even if I just had time between classes to jog to Cupid Falls or head over to the rope swing and cliffs at the lake," said Holland, who often traveled across the state line to North Carolina to climb a few routes up Pickens Nose or kayak the Nantahala River.

"The emphasis that my professor Rob Dussler placed on experiential education really shaped my academic pursuits," she said. "I've seen firsthand the impact it can have on a student's experience."

From leading outdoor group development programs for middle school students, to facilitating kayak roll clinics, Holland's experiences at YHC helped solidify her decision to pursue the field of outdoor education.

After graduation, she took a position as the student services coordinator for Landmark Learning, which specializes in training outdoor professionals in wilderness medicine and rescue training programs.

She is currently pursuing her master's degree in education at Western Carolina University while working at Montreat College, where she manages nearly 200 students who work in many locations around campus including the Outdoor Education Center and the Team and Leadership Center.

"My time at Young Harris set me up for success," she said. "It gave me the confidence to pursue a field I'm very passionate about and the ability to lead students knowing I have the education and experience to make a lasting impact."

In 2011, Holland joined the mountaineering staff at the prestigious Asheville School. She facilitates climbing, backpacking and kayaking trips that challenge and encourage students to obtain weekly goals as well as overall program objectives.

"The opportunity to work with students and give them the ability to have similar experiences that inspired me to pursue the field of outdoor education is an incredible thing," she said.

Every climber needs a partner, and Holland found hers in Dan Morris. Her fiancé serves as outdoor director at Mars Hill University just outside their home in Asheville, N.C. Working in higher education often causes the pair to recall the mentors who helped them find their footing.

"There were so many teachers at YHC who had an impact on my life," Holland said. "I remember things they said, which are even more applicable now as I continue to learn and develop as an individual—important life lessons I continue to benefit from every day."

SHANE PHILLIPS, '08

Wilderness Field Guide at Four Circles Recovery Center Asheville, N.C.

It's not uncommon to call upon lessons learned from influential teachers when facing difficult tasks in the workplace. But the stakes are often higher when you have a job like Shane Phillips, '08, who leads groups into the wilderness to face unpredictable forces of nature.

When heavy rains recently made a creek crossing impassable, Phillips summoned skills he honed at Young Harris College—risk assessment, land navigation, group safety—and recalled a time when his professor had to do the same on his behalf.

"Rob Dussler once had to cancel a trip because of threatening lightning storms," he said. "My class and I hated the decision at the time, but I certainly remember it and continue to use that type of good judgment in my own work."

Bypassing the creek led to a challenging hike on unmaintained trails that included drastic changes in elevation and took the group by nameless waterfalls. "Our clients felt genuinely proud of what they accomplished," said Phillips. "That night by the fire, everyone had something unique and powerful to share about our journey."

As a wilderness field guide for Four Circles Recovery Center, Phillips combines traditional substance abuse treatment with an experiential wilderness therapy model. He aims to create a space of physical and emotional safety for clients to begin the recovery process away from day-to-day distractions.

Phillips also teaches skills like hiking, canoeing and primitive fire making. "The lessons learned from these activities carry over into everyday life in important and subtle ways—self efficacy, self care, self esteem."

Being at YHC showed Phillips how powerful the wilderness could be as a teacher in his own life. "My experiences were immensely therapeutic and really cemented my desire to help facilitate this process for others," he explained.

Migrating to northeast Georgia from Atlanta made a huge impression on Phillips, who immediately noticed how peaceful the campus seemed during his summertime tour.

"Everything was more dramatically beautiful than I was used to. The land had an almost mystical quality to it," he said. "The sunsets, the fall colors, the mountain lakes and the explosion of springtime continually inspired me. The mountains keep me grounded in ways no other landscape can."

Once Dussler taught him how to fly fish, Phillips spent his free time wading in nearby rivers and could often be found at Smith Creek perfecting his cast after class. "Sometimes I think I learned just as much in that little stream with my fly line caught in a tree as I did inside the classroom," he mused.

Phillips is quick to point out the "enormous influence" some of his YHC professors had on him—from shaping the way he learned to interact with the world to instilling the importance of always seeking out truths.

"When dealing with the wilderness—and life—you quickly learn how insignificant and small humans are in comparison to the great forces at work around us," he said. "If we are to use the wilderness as a teacher, we have to approach it with a sense of respect and great humility. I first learned that lesson at YHC, and I use it every day on the job."



TRUE TRAILBLAZERS



Phillips crossed the south fork of the Mills River
in Pisgah National Forest in North Carolina.

PHOTOGRAPH BY MORTEN SAVAGE



JOEL METCALFE, '96

Fish Ecologist at Eco Logical Research, Inc.; Kayak Instructor at Tumalo Creek Kayak & Canoe Bend, Ore.



The north Georgia mountains held fond memories for Joel Metcalfe, '96, before he ever visited Young Harris College. He and his friends often hightailed it out of his hometown of Marietta to hike and camp, regularly passing through the Enchanted Valley during their expeditions.

"YHC was at the top of my list of colleges based on location alone," Metcalfe said. "I always knew I wanted to work outdoors in some scientific field, so it was an easy choice."

He sharpened outdoor skills at YHC, including how to backpack and orienteer, and developed a love for kayaking by running ancient southern Appalachian rivers like the Chattooga.

"My friends shared my love of the outdoors and didn't need a mall around the corner to entertain themselves," said Metcalfe. "YHC brings folks together. We have to create our own fun, which makes our bonds that much stronger."

After earning an ecology degree from the University of North Carolina at Asheville, Metcalfe hiked the Appalachian Trail from Maine to Georgia.

He didn't stay home long, landing a job studying the effects of wildfires on plant communities in Utah. He worked as a fire manager for national parks in California, Alaska and Arizona, and as a fire crew captain in Oregon.

In 2012, he joined Eco Logical Research, Inc., as a fish ecologist. He completes population studies for steelhead and salmon in the John Day River basin while working to rebuild the beaver population in eastern Oregon's streams.

"I've shifted from terrestrial ecology to the aquatic side of things," he said. "It's really rewarding to benefit the landscape and see the positive impact of restoration."

Metcalfe wears many other hats—kayak instructor, graduate student at Oregon State University studying fisheries management, world traveler, nature photographer.

"I like to get off the beaten path and see the cast of characters that fill other ecosystems," said Metcalfe. "I try to capture my experiences through my lens, almost as a visual journal."

Along with strengthening his adulation for the outdoors and commitment to conservation at Young Harris, Metcalfe also gained a group of lifelong friends during what he considers "some of the best years" of his life.

"The fact that YHC is a small pond gives everyone a chance to be a big fish in some way," he said. "The only thing certain in life is change, and I hope YHC maintains a small-pond charm for others to experience."



LEFT TO RIGHT Metcalfe visited Salmon Glacier near Hyder, Alaska, and lived 45 minutes from the world's second-largest tree, a giant sequoia dubbed "The President," while working in Sequoia National Park in the southern Sierra Nevada.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY JOEL METCALFE, '96

GRIER FRICKS, '08

Operations Coordinator for the
Education and Stewardship Departments
at Kualoa Ranch Hawaii, Inc.

Kahulu'u, Hawaii

The choice to attend Young Harris College was an easy one for Grier Fricks, '08. "It was in my blood," explained the Rome, Ga., native who frequently made the two-hour trip north with her mother, Ramona Joseph Fricks, '71, and three other "Joseph Sisters" to attend reunions on campus.

"I remember always being in love with the mountains. They're captivating," said Fricks. "A deep love of nature was instilled by my family and teachers at a young age—and that only expanded at YHC."

As an inaugural member of the College's women's cross country team, Fricks familiarized herself with the countryside surrounding the campus. Midnight hikes up to Brasstown Bald, backpacking trips and rock climbing excursions were standard ways to spend time with friends.

"YHC draws the type of student who enjoys being immersed in nature. We love to be outside experiencing life and all that it has to offer," Fricks noted. "When you are there, you are *only* there. That means many students rarely leave campus and more relationships are able to grow."

Her surroundings also played a significant role in changing her career path from the field of business to outdoor education. She continued her studies at the University of Georgia, earning a degree in recreation and leisure studies.

"Being immersed in YHC's beautiful setting heightened my awareness and need to be a part of it," said Fricks. "I realized the rewards of the outdoor classroom and made that my focus."

This decision led her to Tennessee and North Carolina, where Fricks worked as a whitewater rafting guide, and then on to the drastically different landscape of Hawaii where she worked as a sea kayaking guide before accepting a position at Kualoa Ranch Hawaii, Inc.

She creates and facilitates experiential learning opportunities for school groups while expanding the team-building program and planning new initiatives. "Our goal is to get children out of the classroom and into nature, where we believe they realize their full potential," Fricks said.

While she has traded in the crisp mountain air for cool ocean breezes, her alma mater is still very much a part of her makeup. "YHC is an emotion as well as a place of education," she mused. "It becomes a part of one's passion, and that's what I bring to my career—passion and a work ethic to ensure my students' success."

TRUE TRAILBLAZERS



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP RIGHT Fricks snorkeled off the coast of Mānana Island, hiked Olomana, a set of three mountainous peaks on the windward side of O'ahu, and walked along the magnificent Nā Pali coast of Kauai Okina.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TREVOR BELNAP



An Experiential Education

BY ROB DUSSLER

I remember around 10 years ago when I was just starting the outdoor leadership program at Young Harris College, trustee Doug Mitchell approached me holding a program flyer. He excitedly exclaimed, "Let's see. Backpacking, fly fishing, canoeing, rock climbing... Shoot, when I was a YHC student, we used to skip class to do these things—and now you can earn a degree in them!"

He then told me earnestly that if I needed any help getting the program up and running, I had his full support. He also instructed me to make sure the program thrived and to seek to make a difference in students' lives. I am still thankful to Doug for his support, and I believe we are well on our way.

I often hear, "Outdoor leadership... Cool! What is it?" The most eloquent answer usually comes from our students. Our program is about human growth and development. The philosophy of outdoor adventure learning and experiential education claims people learn the best—and more fully experience themselves, others and the world around them—when they are immersed in small, intentional groups and engaged in personally relevant experiences.

These experiences are enlivened in outdoor adventure settings where real challenge and risk must be confronted—placing a premium on problem solving, creativity, communication, character and spirit.

Initially, students are drawn to the major because they have powerful memories of outdoor experiences. They come to YHC because, among many things, we're in the mountains. They want to get outside, they have a desire to be fully immersed in life and they are searching for the next adventure that lies ahead.

The activities are the most graphic and readily accessible representations of the field. Many of us are drawn to the glossy pictures or riveting videos we see of high-adrenaline pursuits. They are definitely inspiring. Students select the program because they want to learn how to do these things, and yet there is much more to outdoor leadership than that.

Students start out by participating in the Discovery Semester, a highly experiential, field-intensive block of technical skills courses. They learn the foundational technical aspects and competencies of a variety of outdoor pursuits.

As exciting and engaging as this experience may be, a distinct shift happens afterwards. Students realize they can effectively plan and execute a multiday backpacking trip complete with navigation, risk management planning, cooking hearty meals in the backcountry, pitching a tarp in the rain and a number of other foundational skills. They can roll kayaks, set up rock climbing anchors, rappel off 100-foot cliffs, catch a wild trout on a fly rod, descend into a cave and much more. They can take care of themselves in the woods, on rivers and high up in the mountains. And they do so with a personal woodland ethic and care for the places they go.

What happens next is the students want to learn beyond the technical skills. Essentially, they are trying to give voice to their experience, to answer the questions they get from parents, peers and society: *What is outdoor leadership and what are you going to do with a degree in that field?*

Enter classes such as “Wilderness as a Metaphor,” “Theory and Practice of Experiential Education,” and “Program Administration,” just to name a few. Students are exposed to wilderness literature and explore the teachings of philosophers. They wrestle with ethical dilemmas and how they might confront the problems in traditional education. They clarify their epistemological perspectives and assumptions, and understand and entertain multiple and diverse perspectives. They formulate and express their teaching and learning philosophies. They develop conviction about their lives and learn to stand behind what they are doing, why they are doing it and why it matters in the world.

One of the distinct benefits of this program is the transferability of the skills acquired. No matter where students go from YHC or what profession they choose, the skills and experiences they gain are invaluable. For example, I can’t imagine a situation in life that commands more trust, effective communication, understanding of another person and attention to detail than that of the relationship between a climber and belayer (the one holding the rope and ensuring the climber doesn’t fall). The lessons learned here stay with you.

But can our graduates find a job in this field? In a 2012 report by the Outdoor Industry Association, outdoor recreation accounted for 6.4 million American jobs in addition to \$646 billion of spending in the country. So the short answer is a resounding “yes.”

We have graduates who are employed in exciting careers all over the world. Some are directors of environmental education centers, camps and adventure therapy programs. Some are rock climbing guides in Alaska, while others are river managers and whitewater instructors in breathtaking locales like the Grand Canyon. Some are leading sea kayaking expeditions in New Zealand and Hawaii. Some are teaching English in Japan, and others have chosen to pursue master’s degrees in environmental science or outdoor education.

Most, if not all, are searching and *finding*—and I know they would say that following their heart was worth it.



YHC Outdoor Leadership Department Chair and Instructor of Outdoor Leadership Rob Dussler joined the YHC faculty in 2002. He earned his bachelor’s degree in psychology from St. Edward’s University in Austin, Texas, and his master’s degree in outdoor education administration from Georgia College and State University. He is currently pursuing a doctorate in recreation and leisure studies from the University of Georgia.

MY TOP 5: OUTDOOR CLASSROOMS

One of Rob Dussler’s favorite aspects of teaching outdoor leadership at YHC is the educational environment—both physical and social. The area surrounding the Enchanted Valley is literally his classroom, and these are his top five teaching spots.

1. Chattooga River

This is the crown jewel of southeastern rivers. It’s one of the few free-flowing rivers left, and its headwaters and corridor exist within the national forest. It’s designated as “wild and scenic” for a reason.

2. Appalachian Trail

I love the section between Blood Mountain and Unicoi Gap. It can be broken up in a number of ways to accommodate multiday trips or day hikes. The ridge hiking and views are fantastic. It’s up and down, though. Classic Georgia A.T.—not for the faint of heart.

3. Pickens Nose

This is an obscure, small crag and rappel that sees minimal use. Located in the Standing Indian Wilderness, students drop off a 90-foot free rappel that is absolutely breathtaking. I once watched a rainstorm form below us in the valley, then rise above and soak us, then blow off to the east. It was awesome.

4. Nantahala River

Hard to beat world-class kayaking, canoeing and rafting with the Appalachian Trail crossing the river and the best single-track mountain biking in the Southeast right there at Tsali. Did I mention it’s loaded with big trout?

5. Old Wagon Trail


How many colleges have a trail on their campus that leads to the highest mountain in the state? I suggest a full moon hike in the middle of the winter. Leave a car at the top with a thermos of hot chocolate. The mountains just glow in the moonlight, especially if there’s snow.

INQUIRING MINDS: DR. JIM BISHOP

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT DEAN

Since 2009, Young Harris College Assistant Professor of English Jim Bishop, Ph.D., has been sharing his love of nature with students through his teaching of environmental writing and literature. He spent five years working at the Outdoor Academy of the Southern Appalachians in Pisgah Forest, N.C., before coming to YHC. We tracked him down near Lake Chatuge to find out more about how he brings the outdoors into the classroom, what it was like hiking the Appalachian Trail (A.T.) and why he thinks Walt Whitman is the best nature writer.





WHERE DID YOU GROW UP? I'm from Auburn, Maine, a textile mill town on the Androscoggin River. When I was growing up, the Androscoggin was rated by the Environmental Protection Agency as one of the seven most polluted rivers in the United States due to runoff from paper mills upstream. I vividly remember the acrid smell of the river, the mysterious orange foam floating on its surface, the swirls of poison collecting in eddies. I've always known I wanted to teach others the importance of the natural environment and why it needs protecting. The Androscoggin, it turns out, has been a major—and rare—environmental success story. The river has been cleaned up considerably in recent years. I hear nowadays that people catch—and eat!—fish from the Androscoggin. I'm not sure I'd be brave enough to do that.

WHAT WAS IT LIKE TEACHING AT THE OUTDOOR ACADEMY OF THE SOUTHERN APPALACHIANS? The school was very small—36 students with only a handful of faculty and staff. I enjoyed living so intimately, and so simply, with a group of other people. We shared all our meals together, worked in the garden together, went to class together, played music together, got silly together. I got to know my students and fellow faculty extremely well. It's a very intense, very immediate way to live.

WHAT MADE YOU DECIDE TO HIKE THE A.T.? My family owned a small piece of land in the mountains of western Maine, about an hour from the Canadian border and just a few miles from the A.T. I've always been fascinated with the culture of long-distance hiking: the walking sticks, the long beards, the filthy backpacks, the strange smells wafting from their clothing after months on the trail. After I graduated college, I spent a few years doing seasonal work as an environmental educator and ski bum. I saved a little money and decided to spend six months on the trail. It was one of the most profound experiences of my life. One thing I loved to do was

wake up early and get on the trail an hour before dawn. Every day I got to greet the sunrise from the trail. One memory that remains especially vivid is the morning a red-tailed hawk suddenly alighted from a branch not five feet away from my face. Time stopped. I felt touched by a powerful force.

WHY DID YOU CHOOSE A DOCTORATE FOCUSING ON ENVIRONMENTAL LITERATURE? I wanted to talk with other people about books that explore our relationship to the natural world. Basically, my degree allows me to get paid for hosting book club discussions. And I get to pick all the books.

WHAT THEMES ARE YOU MOST PASSIONATE ABOUT EXPLORING WITH STUDENTS? I'm very concerned about climate change. I feel compelled to approach climate change because it's an issue that many people consider too abstract, too contentious and too politically charged to discuss in polite company. The thing is, people are already being affected by the rise in global temperatures that we're seeing. Ask the Inuit, who are watching the polar ice caps melt at an alarming rate. Ask the people of the Marshall Islands, who are evacuating their homes as rising sea levels claim them. This is an issue that has profound implications for the future of humanity, and those who will be affected most severely are those who are already most vulnerable: indigenous people, poor people. This is not just an environmental issue, it's a moral issue.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO WRITE ABOUT? With apologies to my colleagues who teach in Maxwell Center, I'm interested in ways of thinking that challenge Western scientific rationalism. In particular, I have an interest in the ways indigenous people have harvested wild plants for food, medicine and spiritual practices. There's so much we can learn from plants.

WHAT'S THE COOLEST ENGLISH COURSE YOU'VE

CREATED SO FAR? "African American Nature Poetry." I was astounded by the radiance and poignancy of the poems we studied. Camille Dungy's anthology "Black Nature" is a truly remarkable collection. I think the students really enjoyed discussing these criminally understudied writers. Some of them, I'm sure, were the first people ever to write analytical papers about the poems they chose.

WHO IS ONE NATURE AUTHOR EVERYONE SHOULD

KNOW? Walt Whitman. He wrote, "Now I see the making of the best persons: It is to grow in the open air and to eat and sleep with the earth." How many of us do that anymore?

WHERE DO YOU LIKE TO WRITE AND READ?

I'm tempted to say next to a babbling creek. Which could be true. But I'm also a sucker for a good coffee shop or a cozy cushioned chair in the rear of a dusty old bookstore.

WHEN YOU'RE OUTSIDE, WHAT SOUNDTRACK PLAYS IN YOUR HEAD?

I recently made a playlist consisting entirely of songs dealing with animals. It's got tunes about wolves, eagles, ravens, salamanders. Baboons. Giraffes. Iguanas. Boa constrictors. Cockroaches. This is what happens when I give myself license to pursue an obsession.

WHAT'S YOUR PERFECT WEEKEND?

Whitewater canoeing down the Nantahala River. Mountain trout on the grill. Making music around the campfire with friends. A long hike in the mountains with my dog. And the best part: returning home, weary, to a freshly made bed.

WHAT LITERARY LANDMARK WOULD YOU LIKE TO VISIT?

I'd love to hike the John Muir Trail in California. In fact, I'd love to do the entire Pacific Crest Trail that runs from Mexico to Canada. It's about 2,600 miles long, and I figure the whole journey would take around six months.

IF YOU COULD BE THE MAIN CHARACTER IN ANY STORY, WHO WOULD IT BE?

Natty Bumppo in James Fenimore Cooper's "Leatherstocking Tales." Natty is a man of nearly impossible bravery, intuition and ingenuity. He moves easily between native people and whites. He knows the woods—all the animals and plants. He's almost absurdly manly. He kills a few more people than I'd be comfortable with but, well, this is fiction, right? Anyway, they had it coming.

WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE SEASON?

I love them all. Really. Growing up in Maine you learn to embrace the seasons, all of them, or else you go crazy when it's 30 below outside.

IF YOU WEREN'T A PROFESSOR, WHAT WOULD YOU BE?

A television game show host. A search-and-rescue medic. A whale watch tour guide. A radio disc jockey. Actually, I've been all of these. ■

MY TOP 5:

NATURE-THEMED BOOKS

If Dr. Jim Bishop were stranded on a desert island, these are the titles he would want to pass the time with.

1. Henry David Thoreau, "Walden"
2. Walt Whitman, "Leaves of Grass"
3. Annie Dillard, "Pilgrim at Tinker Creek"
4. Edward Abbey, "Desert Solitaire"
5. Rachel Carson, "Silent Spring"

REQUIRED READING

A syllabus in Dr. Jim Bishop's class is guaranteed to include some great—and sometimes obscure—literature with environmental themes. We asked some of his students to weigh in on their most memorable reads.



"FLIGHT BEHAVIOR"

BARBARA KINGSOLVER

Course: Appalachian Literature

The novel provided a fascinating insight to the reality of climate change, but was not at all preachy about it. Through its fictional storyline, "Flight Behavior" touched on climate change subtly, yet was poignant enough to

allow the reader to draw his or her own conclusions about the environmental change. The book inspired all of us in the class to attend a campus lecture about climate concern by a different author. This book would be ideal for anyone interested in climate change, but also anyone who enjoys a good read, as Kingsolver takes her readers on a fun ride.

Heather Poole, Young Harris



"WHITE EGRETS"

DEREK WALCOTT

Course: Postcolonial Literature

Derek Walcott's "White Egrets" encompasses many themes in its relatively small amount of pages, ranging from dynamics of power to the marks left on formerly colonized people by their oppressors. I find the poetry it contains most

remarkable because of how it approaches these issues through nature. Walcott beautifully analogizes the natural world of the Caribbean to describe his feelings on these topics and others like love and aging. Walcott's victory is in making readers of all types—whether in situations similar to those of Caribbean people or in circumstances vastly different—sympathize with the topics he explores.

Sara Beaster, Murphy, N.C.



"THE COLLECTED POEMS OF AUDRE LORDE"

AUDRE LORDE

Course: African American Nature Poetry

This is a thoughtful and creative collection within the genre of nature writing. Even more than simply utilizing the natural world as her subject, Lorde manages to capture and portray both the beauty and brokenness of human, societal and earthly

natures in the form and style of her poems. The result is an artful collection that leaves the reader with the dual emotions of nostalgia and hope, a sort of complex inspiration that is often hard to find in anything other than the stillness and purity of nature itself.

Emily Hornsby, Nashville, Tenn.

MOUNTAIN LION LUMINARY: DR. STEVE HARVEY

BY JESSICA LARSON

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT DEAN

Educator and scholar with a penchant for creative writing. Author of three collections of personal essays. Topnotch banjo, guitar and ukulele player.

Young Harris College Professor of English Steve Harvey, Ph.D., looks impressive on paper, but his résumé isn't what has been drawing students to take his classes for the past 38 years. Well, maybe the banjo playing has a little something to do with it.

"I get to teach a class on the English ballads and often bring in my banjo to play Appalachian versions of the songs, which the students sing with me," he said. A member of the regional folk group Butternut Creek and Friends, Dr. Harvey is used to having an audience for his music. "One student wrote on his evaluation that the best part of the class was my banjo playing."

It's easy to assume that after several decades, he may have traded in his backwoods banjo for techier teaching aids. But that wouldn't be quintessentially Dr. Harvey—or his students.

"I wouldn't be fooled by their cell phones and other gadgets," he said. "They still appreciate in-depth, face-to-face conversations about what they read and care about. No school is a better setting for that than Young Harris."

Dr. Harvey came to YHC in 1976 after a fortuitous meeting with YHC professor emeritus and noted Georgia poet Bettie Sellers, the head of the Department of English at the time, at a writing conference.

"Unfortunately, I am given to sleepwalking, and one night during the conference I found myself in my pajamas on the motel balcony," he recalled. "I suspect I would not have gotten the job if Bettie had caught me, but I woke up before anyone noticed and slipped unseen back into my room."

When asked what makes YHC different than other schools, he said, "Even though it's growing and the roads to Atlanta have improved, YHC is still smaller, cozier and more isolated than most colleges."

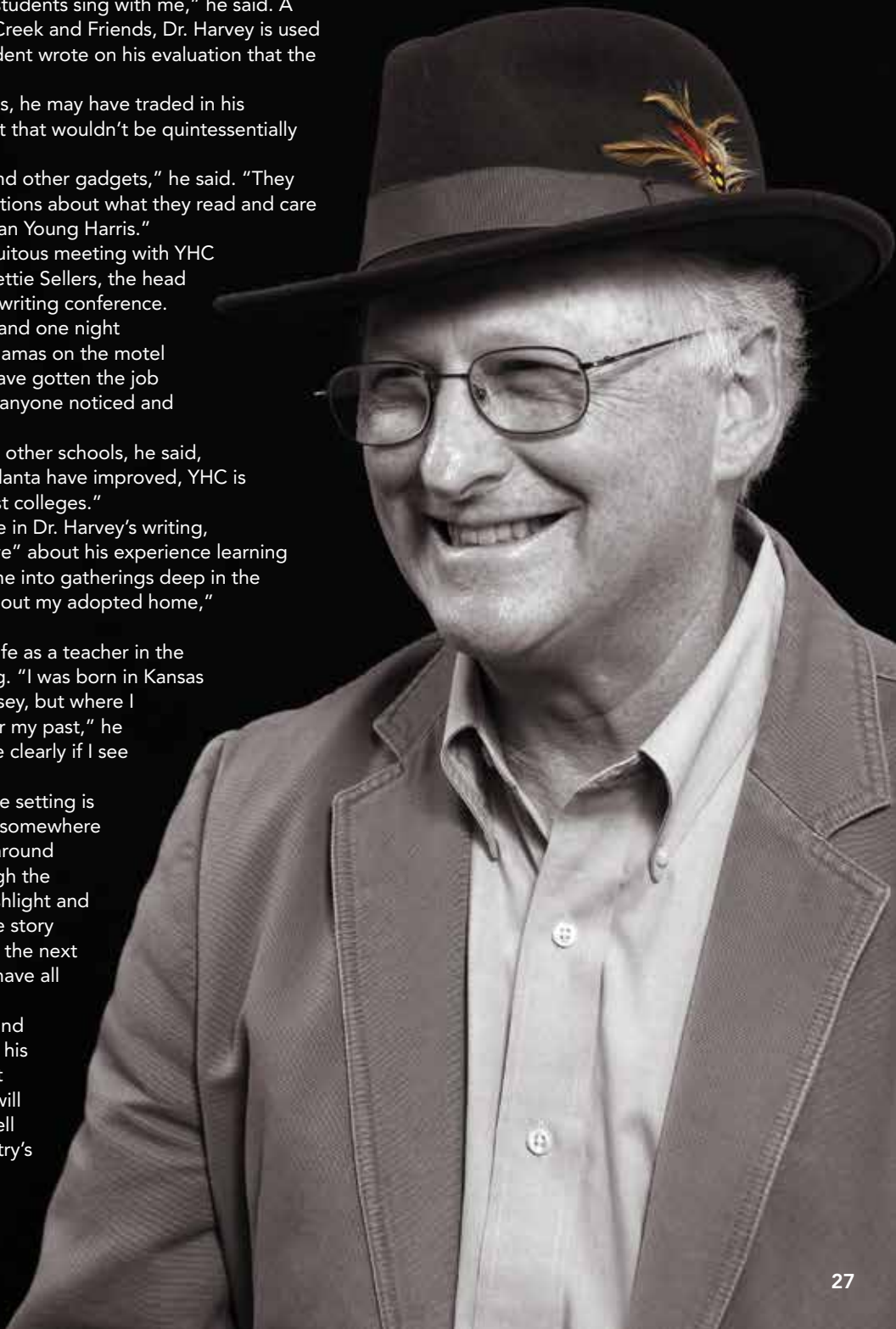
YHC's natural setting has played a major role in Dr. Harvey's writing, particularly in his book "Bound for Shady Grove" about his experience learning to play mountain banjo. "The instrument led me into gatherings deep in the hollows around here, which taught me a lot about my adopted home," he explained.

Dr. Harvey is also including more about his life as a teacher in the mountains in the memoir he's currently crafting. "I was born in Kansas and grew up in New York, Illinois and New Jersey, but where I teach and live have been an important filter for my past," he said. "Apparently I understand who I was more clearly if I see it in terms of the Georgia mountains."

When it comes to a writer like Dr. Harvey, the setting is everything. Even his ideal class would be held somewhere singular: the woods. "We would sit in a circle around dying flames telling ghost stories to get through the night," he explained. "One person has the flashlight and shines it under his or her face to tell part of the story and then passes it on to another person to tell the next part, so that by the time the story is done we have all had our say and are scared to death."

Like the laurel-lined creeks, hardwood hills and gravel roads that have inspired Dr. Harvey and his students alike, his affinity for the outdoors isn't going anywhere. Dr. Harvey—and his banjo—will continue to inspire students to trade in their cell phones for a front-row seat in one of the country's most beautiful classrooms.

❖ The opening chapter of Dr. Harvey's memoir titled "The Book of Knowledge" was recently selected for publication in the annual anthology "The Best American Essays 2013."





THE ART Nature OF

BY KRYSTIN DEAN

When the black sky is illuminated by a full moon at midnight, make your way down to the crossroads. There, the devil will be waiting. You will be offered whatever you most desire. All it costs is your soul.

For many years, this fable fascinated Morgan “Tex” Fambrough—a local who has lived in Towns, Union and Rabun counties. When deciding what to submit to Young Harris College’s Student Juried Art Exhibition earlier this year, she decided on a piece aptly titled “The Crossroads.”

“I looked further into this old tale and the people telling it,” she said. “I gravitated to the concept that any worldly possessions are not worth your soul—meaning your family, community, friends and the people who share the world with you.”

Each part of her installation signified an element of the story. The devil was a cow pelvis turned upside down to resemble a face. Bits of broken mirror littered on the ground were shattered vanity, and pieces of currency strewn about signified that “all money eventually falls away.” Jars filled with small stones became the weight bestowed upon the soul.

“Tex always has an interesting point of view, and she’s not afraid to be herself,” noted Dean of the Division of Fine Arts, Art Department Chair and Associate Professor of Art Ted Whisenhunt. “She takes chances, and she’s willing to spend the necessary amount of time to make a well-crafted work of art.”

Home is definitely where Fambrough’s heart is. She chose YHC in order to remain close to it and acknowledged the influence of the Appalachian setting that helps “put a certain ease” on her pieces.

“FOR EVERY 100 INSIGNIFICANT THINGS THAT ARE THROWN AWAY, ONE SIGNIFICANT THING CAN BE MADE, AND THAT’S ALWAYS BEEN A FAIR TRADE-OFF.”

MORGAN “TEX” FAMBROUGH

“The sheer beauty of the place, a sense of family, and the inherent traditions and superstitions that reside in these mountains grab my attention and my tools,” she explained.

Fambrough’s work often incorporates items that have been discarded—a signature influenced by her desire to protect and preserve her home. “For every 100 insignificant things that are thrown away, one significant thing can be made,” she said, “and that’s always been a fair trade-off.”

While her work remains rooted in her environment, Fambrough has grown more attentive to the people who inhabit it. “It’s absurd how often we listen to stories we grow up with and never really delve into what they share about a community,” she said.

A sense of place is a common theme for many artists. It’s easy to be inspired by one’s surroundings—the literal landscape and the culture embedded within it. “Young Harris happens to be rich in both,” Whisenhunt pointed out. “We have deep-rooted Appalachian culture mixed with the awe-inspiring natural beauty of the mountains and valleys.”

Many students strive to find new ways to tell old tales entrenched in the region. Trent Sizemore, a senior from Lilburn, uses his camera lens to tell the story of mountain ranges that have been around for millions of years.

An avid hiker and fisherman, Sizemore often frequents Great Smoky Mountains National Park and revisits waterfalls and lookout points like Big Laurel Falls and Pickens Nose in North Carolina. He will sit in the same spot for hours, chronicling the constantly shifting scene.

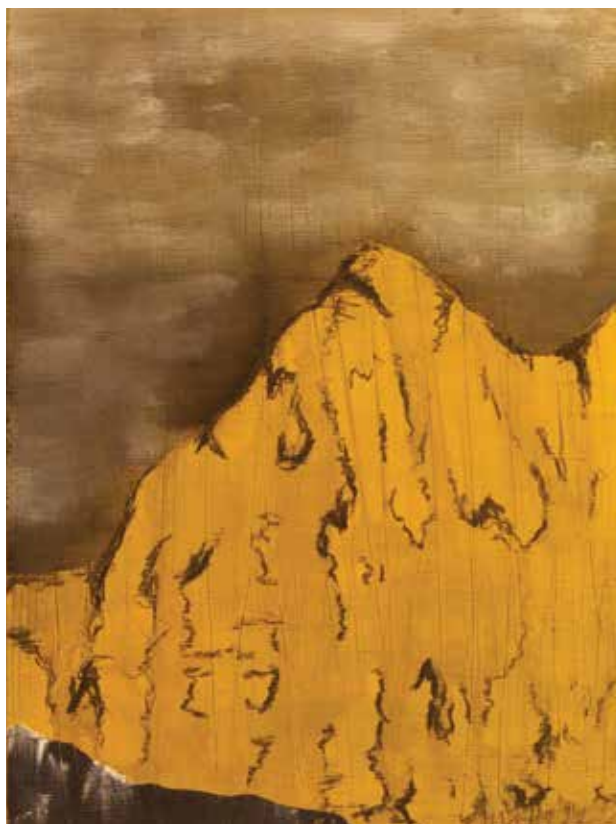
“Nature is wild, unpredictable and changes every single minute,” said Sizemore. “I try to take a view people see every day and turn it into something completely new just by being there at a different time or in different light.”

Many of his photographs utilize forced perspective and a technique of combining multiple exposures into one to create the textured look of a painting. His overarching objective is always to capture a realistic impression of the landscape.

“Trent has the eye to capture stunning images and the patience

Morgan “Tex” Fambrough, junior, Hiawassee

“Differences,” acrylic, pastel, charcoal, rust and nails, 11” x 19”





to wait for the correct light,” said Adjunct Instructor of Art and Campus Gate Art Gallery (CGAG) Director Scott Dean. “He continues to amaze the community with his representational and artistic landscape and wildlife images.”

Sizemore regularly exhibits his work on a regional and national scale. He said many patrons like having a piece of local art in their home because “they like to tell people the place in the picture is right down the road.”

YHC has long been known as a cultural center for the region. With Whisenhunt at the helm, the Art Department aims to carry on that tradition by producing outstanding artists.

“We want our students to have a strong foundation with traditional media and techniques, be able to think critically about art, become creative problem solvers and express themselves visually,” he said.

The CGAG gives students an outlet to display their work during the Student Juried Art Exhibition each fall and Senior Thesis Exhibition in the spring. The gallery also annually hosts four additional shows by professional artists.

New faculty member Adjunct Instructor of Art Duncan Baird kicked off the 2013-2014 season with “From Where I Stand,” an exhibition inspired by ancient forms of the mound builders that once inhabited the Ohio and Mississippi river valleys.

The works were completed during a five-year period spent in the Mississippi Delta, where he had relocated after having been away for a number of years. The experience gave him a renewed sense of his surroundings, which became an integral touchstone for his ideas and art—both the lay of the land and the character of the people.

“Representing that region was not a conscious decision in the beginning,” Baird recalled. “As I began to rediscover the textures, colors and forms of the area, the thinking and the work also began to take shape along those lines.”

He is still acclimating to his new home in north Georgia and anticipates the area will influence his work to a great degree. “I just have to be open and receptive to it,” he said.

The region is already informing his class assignments. One of the first projects for his introductory drawing course aimed to teach students that materials are available right under their feet—literally.



Ted Whisenhunt, Dean of the Division of Fine Arts, Art Department Chair and Associate Professor of Art

ABOVE “Appalachian Ruckus,” mixed media collage, 60” x 75”

BELOW “Gid Tanner,” mixed media painting, 48” x 30”

“NATURE IS WILD, UNPREDICTABLE AND CHANGES EVERY SINGLE MINUTE.” TRENT SIZEMORE

"We used Georgia mud to draw with. It's a beautiful, rich sienna color," said Baird. "I wanted to emphasize one way of seeing that's rooted in our biological ability to do so—and I also wanted the students to get their hands dirty a little."

The class used the red clay to block in large spaces, then found sticks readily available around the YHC Fine Arts Annex to draw with. Dipping the stick in ink, they carefully studied every contour and detail.

"We were pulling the environment into our thinking," explained Baird. "A sense of place can be integrated into one's work, but it should come as a natural feeling. It can't be forced. Integrity in such matters takes a tremendous amount of patience."

While a birthplace can be a movable muse that stays with an artist wherever they go, fresh sources of inspiration inevitably emerge when they establish a new home.

Whisenhunt's last major body of work, "Alabama Vernacular," celebrated the spirituality and folklore of the Black Belt region of his home state. He is currently working on a series of paintings and sculptures that focus on common topics found in traditional Appalachian fiddle tunes, ranging from farm animals to faith.

"It takes a while for me to identify and absorb the local culture before I can make connections that influence my art," said Whisenhunt, who was drawn to the College due to his

interest in Appalachia.

The Art Department embraces the rich heritage of the area and intentionally exposes students to it for inspiration. A variety of assignments incorporated into the curriculum help students make cultural connections.

As part of one of Whisenhunt's painting courses, students recently created mixed media pieces about the meaning of the word Appalachia. "They had so many different ideas," he said. "No two paintings turned out alike."

Themes like Christianity, Native American culture and coal mining developed into sophisticated pieces that evoked both emotion and understanding.

As part of his photography course, Dean asks a representative from the College's Center for Appalachian Studies and Community Engagement to speak to his students about the history and current influences of Appalachia.

"So many students aren't from the area and don't know much about where we live besides the physical landscape of the place," said Dean, who charges students with capturing a topic related to the region that came up in the classroom discussion.

The lens lets students hone in on the details of the spots they visit—a steady hand weaving a chair seat, a vibrant motion blur of contra dancing, multicolored maize hanging in a storefront, a pile of shavings at a woodturner's feet.

"The camera allows them to view their surroundings in

Jerilyn Oquendo, junior, Plant City, Fla.

"Stalk," driftwood, wire and leaves, 36" x 49" x 24"



a different way. It's also a tool that makes it easier to start a conversation," said Dean. "The goal of the exercise is for students to creatively immerse themselves in their new home."

While students are given the freedom to explore many styles and themes as they approach upper-level courses, their surroundings still tend to influence their work.

Jerilyn Oquendo, a junior from Plant City, Fla., was drawn to the College by "a feeling of simplicity, understanding and awe" the moment she set foot on campus. "I felt like this place was calling my name," she said.

As a sophomore, Oquendo took the top prize at the Student Juried Art Exhibition with her wood, acrylic and mixed media piece "Still"—a depiction of a small child from Appalachia "that focused on the way things used to be."

She has a penchant for using unexpected materials in her work. "Stalk," a sculpture made of pieces of petrified driftwood Oquendo found near the campus, received third place in this year's juried show.

"The materials definitely make a difference when looking at aesthetics and the concept," she said. "In this part of the state, there is nothing but natural resources which, to me, are the best."

Her mentor, Whisenhunt, said it's common for Oquendo to rework a piece several times until she's satisfied with the result. She has also gotten used to the constructive criticism that comes

“WE HAVE DEEP-ROOTED APPALACHIAN CULTURE MIXED WITH THE AWE-INSPIRING NATURAL BEAUTY OF THE MOUNTAINS AND VALLEYS.”

TED WHISENHUNT

with the territory of being a student artist.

"It's a hard process, but it always helps you improve," said Oquendo. "My work has completely transformed in such a positive way. I've become comfortable with different mediums, and I've learned that sometimes the little details can make something amazing."

Fambrough attributed her growth as an artist to the balance of the professional development students receive combined with a high level of personal attention.

"The company of the students and professors is what impresses me the most about this College," she said. "I also really enjoy the creativity that's required. It helps me approach situations in my life in a unique and flavorful way."



Grace Patterson, junior, Blairsville
"Agowatiha," acrylic, 48" x 96"



According to Whisenhunt, the artwork being produced at YHC is maturing as a result of the new four-year program that allows students to continue to develop skills they refined in foundational courses while focusing more on content.

"This shift makes the students think more about the meaning behind the work, which allows them to express themselves more effectively," he said.

While experiences outside the classroom help shape the nature of the art students create, one of the most influential communities they experience is the one they find right on campus.

The Annex has indubitably become a home for the Art Department, with various studio spaces serving as de facto family rooms where students and faculty spend time celebrating triumphs, working through trying times and, most importantly, telling their stories.

Oquendo likened being an art student at YHC to being part of a "family unit" full of different personalities. "We bounce ideas off of each other and inspire one another on a daily basis," she said. "I honestly can't imagine having a better experience anywhere else." ■

Kasey Bezio, freshman, Decatur
 "Untitled," ink and mud, 24" x 18"

PRESERVING A *Folk Art* TRADITION

Young Harris College recently introduced a colorful and unique piece of folk art in the form of a bottle tree located in front of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Community Engagement.

YHC Groundskeeper Joe Tiger first proposed the project due to his knowledge of the southern Appalachian tradition. Tiger grew up in Hayesville, N.C., and regularly saw bottle trees adorning the local landscape.

"A friend of my grandmother told me they protected homes from 'haints,' or lost souls that didn't make it to their next destination," Tiger explained. "The haint would be attracted by the shiny, colorful glass and enter the bottle where they would get trapped inside."

The bottles are placed upside down with the neck facing the trunk because legend states that the haints, derived from the word "haunts," cannot exit a bottle if it's upside down. Blue bottles are considered most effective, and the bright cobalt color is often referred to as "haint blue."

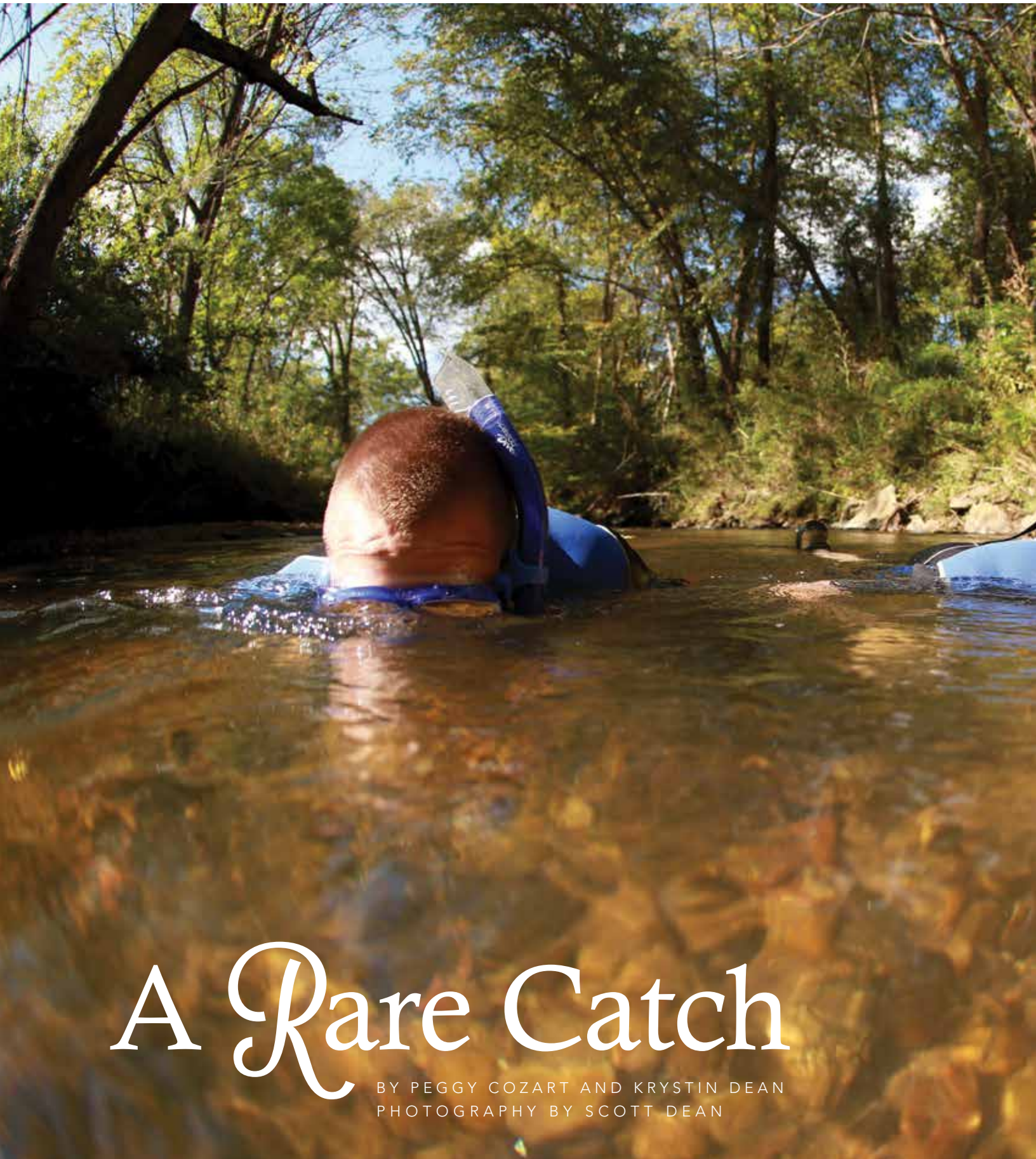
Bottle trees are now primarily used as yard art and often feature a metal base. However, Tiger suggested that the "trunk" of YHC's tree be constructed out of wood from a sycamore that previously resided on campus to further enhance the connection with the local area.

"The bottle tree is a visual and cultural representation of this once remote region and the people who lived here," said Tiger. "It provides a reference for local culture and stands as a piece of folk art I hope will be enjoyed for its aesthetics and meaning."

Art students welded and installed metal branches for the tree and added bottles donated by Crane Creek Vineyards in Young Harris.

"Not only is the bottle tree visually striking, but it also represents the rich heritage of the southern Appalachian region," said Dean of the Division of Fine Arts, Art Department Chair and Associate Professor of Art Ted Whisenhunt. "Hopefully the tree raises questions that lead to discussions about folklore and spark an interest to do more research on the subject."





A Rare Catch

BY PEGGY COZART AND KRYSTIN DEAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT DEAN



It's not unusual to find Young

Harris College Assistant Professor of Biology Johnathan Davis, Ph.D., and senior biology major David Atwood, of Waynesville, N.C., staring into streams with specialized binoculars or clad in wetsuits snorkeling the chilly, shallow waters of Brasstown Creek.

This summer, they spent around six hours a day tracking an elusive target—the sicklefin redhorse. This rare fish the size of a trout can be found in just one stream in Georgia that just so happens to be located near the YHC campus.

“It’s difficult for state biologists to intensively study and monitor this fish due to timing and budgetary issues,” explained Dr. Davis. “Its limited range makes it a candidate for the endangered species list, which would require close monitoring. My hope is that YHC will play an important role in that process.”

Through a partnership with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Dr. Davis received a grant to study this migratory fish that swims upstream in Brasstown Creek from Murphy, N.C., to Young Harris to spawn each spring.

He enlisted Atwood to help complete a pilot study intended to determine the best sampling strategies for collecting data. They set out to “catch” sightings of the sicklefin and other redhorse species to estimate their location and population size.

Sounding like a seasoned scientist, Atwood explained, “Through snorkeling and seining the extremely cold water and completing visual surveys of the watershed, we made some neat discoveries like finding the sicklefin further upstream than had ever before been spotted.”

This sort of field experience can only be found at YHC, a biologically rich campus situated among multiple ecological systems.

“Some days I look around and think I got lucky—absolutely lucky,” Dr. Davis said. He described north Georgia as an “aquatic diversity hotspot” with more species of fishes, crayfishes and freshwater invertebrates than any other part of the country.

“My desire is to literally immerse students in this diversity so they can see and experience the creatures of our local waters,” said Dr. Davis, whose research primarily promotes the conservation of these species.

As part of an “Ichthyology” course, he often takes students to nearby bodies of water like the Conasauga River, Abrams Creek and Chattahoochee River to sample the fish community.

“I have my hands on fish every day,” he said. “In 10 minutes, I can make it from my house to Lake Chatuge and be floating around in my canoe. Is there anything better?”

A native of Memphis, Tenn., Dr. Davis credited his father with instilling his love of the outdoors and wildlife. When he decided to earn a B.S. in wildlife and fisheries science, M.S. in environmental biology, and Ph.D. in environmental science, he joked that he knew job openings would “almost all be rural.”

In addition to the research opportunities afforded by the region, Dr. Davis was drawn to the small-school environment at the College that would allow him to work closely with students. “They get invested in you,” he explained. “They try harder.”



Dr. Davis and Atwood snorkeled and seined the water of Brasstown Creek to study the sicklefin redhorse.

From preparing students to conduct and present undergraduate research, to advising YHC's bass fishing team and the "Underground" Bible study group, Dr. Davis embodies what it means to be a member of the YHC family. It's no wonder he was voted 2012 Faculty Member of the Year and received the Exemplary Teaching Award in 2013.

"When students plug into something, they are more likely to get passionate," he said. "Almost every student professes a desire to do something they love, but it's hard to know how much you will like doing a job or activity until you get into the trenches and start working."

Shortly after joining the YHC faculty in 2011, Dr. Davis started looking for potential research projects. He soon discovered that an endangered crayfish species in Georgia could be found in small tributary creeks of the Hiwassee River.

Kacey Miller, '13, of Kingsland, and Amber Johnson, '13, of Marietta, decided to focus on assessing the crayfish's conservation status for their senior research project. They indubitably enriched their experience by opting to conduct their study with Dr. Davis.

"Kacey and Amber worked very hard to collect those crayfish year-round, even stomping through streams in rainy, wintery conditions," Dr. Davis recalled. "I like how students can come into a research project wide-eyed with minimal knowledge of the subject matter and process, and by the end of the project they have complete ownership of the research."

"This kind of collaboration is what makes YHC so special as an undergraduate institution," added Miller, who currently teaches high school biology in her hometown. "Science is all about working with

peers and other researchers to expand knowledge and ideas, and doing research like that is so much more engaging and rewarding than just learning in a classroom."

Dr. Davis recognizes the difference having hands-on learning opportunities can make. He recalled a turning point during his studies at Mississippi State University when a perceptive professor named Hal Schramm, Ph.D., helped him believe he could be a scientist. "I was only an average student in his class, but I think he saw something in me," said Dr. Davis.

Despite his lack of experience at the time, Dr. Schramm asked Dr. Davis to lead a research project that eventually got published. "Looking back, I know he took a risk. He's a genuine, hard-working man who really enjoys his work and was a great role model," Dr. Davis said. "He also teaches in cowboy boots—but I'm unwilling to go that far yet."

When Dr. Davis encouraged Miller to present the group's findings at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Georgia Chapter of the American Fisheries Society, she was awarded third place in the student paper division and, more notably, was the only undergraduate student to present.

"There's no way I would have come close to placing if it weren't for Dr. Davis," said Miller, who frequently reran stats and practiced her presentation with her mentor. "He spent numerous hours with me, both in the field kicking up crayfish and in the lab explaining to me why those little mudbugs were important."

Miller later snagged the award for Best Undergraduate Presentation in Biology at the 2013 Annual Meeting of the Georgia Academy of Science, while her classmate Emalyn Cork, '13, of Marietta, won top



FROM PAINT BRUSHES TO PETRI DISHES

Students Engage in Undergraduate Research

Young Harris College hosted the first-ever Undergraduate Research Day on campus in March 2013. The event, titled "From Paint Brushes to Petri Dishes," showcased research projects of YHC faculty and students from all academic disciplines.

The concept stemmed from the minds of Associate Professor of Mathematics Lynne Nation, Communication Studies Department Chair and Associate Professor of Communication Studies Jennifer Hallett, Ph.D., and Dean of the Division of Mathematics and Science and Associate Professor of Biology Linda Jones, Ph.D.

The initial goal of the trio was to build a program at YHC that incorporated research across the curriculum, which ultimately led to the idea for a campus-wide event that highlighted a variety of student research being performed at the College.

"Each discipline has their own idea of what research is," noted Dr. Jones. "You could hear a biology presentation followed by one regarding philosophy. It gets you out of your own niche—and that's what a liberal arts education is all about."

The research day included 28 oral and poster presentations regarding topics ranging from "Behavioral Effects in the Classroom on Academic Performance" to "Video Analysis of Two-Dimensional Motion" to "The Comparison and Contrast of Religious Doubt in Christianity and Al-Ghazali's Writings."

"I have so much respect for anyone that completes an in-depth research project," said biology graduate Allie Coker, '13, of Clarkesville, who co-presented a session regarding the electrical field of thunderstorms. "Since all disciplines were represented, everyone had a great opportunity to learn what other students on campus are accomplishing."

honors in the biomedical science category.

As Dr. Davis silently cheered his students on from the audience feeling like "a nervous parent," he saw the fulfillment of a promise he had made as their research mentor to do everything possible to help them succeed.

"There are these revealing moments where you remember you are in a position to influence a student's life. I take this as an almost overwhelming responsibility," he said. "I purposefully push the envelope with them, and they surprise me with what they do with this adversity, producing high-quality research and presentations beyond my expectations."

Atwood's contributions to the sicklefin redhorse research project, which will extend through summer 2015, are culminating as he gears up to present their discoveries to the Southeastern Fishes Council and the American Fisheries Society.

"I'm so grateful to Dr. Davis for all of the time and effort he put into our project," said Atwood. "He definitely went far above and beyond what professors are expected to do."

A starting outfielder on YHC's baseball team, Atwood has already racked up several academic accolades. He recently became the College's first-ever student-athlete named to the National Collegiate Athletics Association Division II Academic All-America Baseball First Team.

"The biggest challenge of playing baseball at the collegiate level is balancing time, especially as a biology major where every class is extremely challenging," he explained. "Being able to do both, while keeping a fun and positive outlook, will go a long way in instilling character that will last the rest of my life."

Atwood plans to pursue a doctorate in physical therapy and eventually open his own practice. He already feels prepared to continue his education thanks to the skills he is sharpening at YHC, from time management to writing and research.

"Working closely alongside Dr. Davis has been a blessing," he said. "His creativity, passion, knowledge, willingness to help and excellence in his field are an inspiration to me as I work toward my future goals."

New student researchers are being recruited to continue the work Atwood began, as Dr. Davis hopes to conduct annual monitoring of the redhorse species within Brasstown Creek and acquire more funding to support continued investigation of the sicklefin. "I anticipate that several senior theses will come out of this work," he said.

Dr. Davis is gearing up to start two projects—one that will analyze the impact of campus development on fish diversity in Corn Creek and another that will examine habitat preferences of a rare crayfish in the headwaters of the Hiwassee River—but most looks forward to the research he has planned with students.

"They have devised some wonderful projects with great potential, and I believe this will be the best senior research the department has produced yet," he said. Many students will present their findings at the second annual Undergraduate Research Day that will be held on campus in March 2014.

"Nothing beats experience," said Dr. Davis, who noted that going through the steps to design, develop and present projects has benefits both in the classroom and beyond. "In the end, research is not just about scientific discovery. It's also about the discovery of self." ■

UNDER THE

BY PEGGY COZART AND KRYSTIN DEAN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEVE MORGAN



"Are We Alone?" In May of 1979, this heavy headline in Young Harris College's newsletter announced the first program presented in O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium by former Professor of Astronomy Jimmy Westlake.

The article described the occasion: "From the moment the lights dimmed and the star projector slowly rose from its well, the audience was transported to the very edge of the Milky Way in search of life on other planets."

More than 30 years later, audiences flock to this facility located inside Maxwell Center as the sun sets on Friday evenings, still seeking to be transported.

Casual observers of the night sky over north Georgia see unchanging darkness and twinkling stars. Visitors to the planetarium, on the other hand, can peer back in time to witness the birth of stars or travel forward to experience the breathtaking pace of the heavens.

Maxwell Center opened in 1979 with the planetarium as the building's impressive centerpiece. Through the decades, the facility has undergone a number of key updates thanks in large part to generous support from the Atlanta-based O. Wayne Rollins Foundation.

The Rollins family name is everywhere you look on the YHC campus—including the Rollins Campus Center that will soon neighbor Maxwell next year. "If you take a stroll around campus, you quickly see the evidence of more than four decades of support and leadership," noted YHC President Cathy Cox.

When the College contemplated ways to attract new students in the late 1970s, the late YHC trustee O. Wayne Rollins pointed out that YHC's location away from the light pollution of a major city was the perfect place for a planetarium.

"He developed and financed the facility which he believed, accurately, would serve as a recruiting tool as high school students came here on field trips," explained YHC trustee Paul Beckham, '63, of Atlanta. Rollins couldn't have been more right.

Many alumni and community members from surrounding counties can still recall getting a field trip form signed to see their first "star show." Countless school groups travel to experience the wonder of the cosmos each year—not only from Georgia, but also North Carolina and Tennessee.

Planetarium Director and Instructor of Astronomy Steve Morgan pointed out how different the experience is for today's stargazers who frequent the 40-foot diameter planetarium—tied as fourth largest in the state.

DO ME

“When planetariums first became popular, it was just a projector in a room with a commentator pointing out things in the night sky with an arrow pointer,” he explained. “Slide projectors became trendy in the 1980s, back when the planetarium director had to manually change each slide as the show progressed. Now, laser projectors and computers do the work.”

A state-of-the-art GOTO Chronos Space Simulator star projector was installed at YHC in 2002—the first model mounted anywhere in the world. “It simulates the night sky from anywhere in the world. It’s optical and mechanical, and it’s accurate to within 10,000 years,” said Morgan.

The facility also boasts a Sky-Skan Definiti six-projector digital system that can probe anywhere in the known universe and see millions of years into the past. With this system, Morgan added, “We can even see the echo of the Big Bang.”

The College saw another astronomical addition in 2002—the opening of the YHC Observatory. Located at an elevation of more than 2,000 feet less than two miles from campus on the flanks of Brasstown Bald, the facility features a Schmidt Cassegrain telescope housed in a 15-foot dome.

The North Georgia Mountains Authority provided the land, cleared the site, created an access road, built bench seating and poured the concrete slab on which the structure sits. The rest is the result of generous gifts from the O. Wayne Rollins Foundation, Frances Wood Wilson Foundation and Eugene Barboza, a lifelong friend of the astronomy program.

With more than 30 engaging Friday-evening public shows each year, it’s easy to forget that the planetarium and observatory are, first and foremost, learning tools. Integrating education and entertainment is a standard practice for the spaces set by the College’s first planetarium director.

Westlake came to YHC after turning down a job offer from Fernbank Science Center in Atlanta—home of the state’s largest planetarium—and made it his mission to make science fun. Under his guidance, the Sky Club was formed in 1983.

“It wasn’t an academic group, but more of a group of students who hung out together and appreciated astronomy,” explained Rob Stanford, ’94, who served as the organization’s president during his student days.

The group assisted with shows and even had the opportunity to help create them. The cosmic concerts were always a favorite, often featuring homemade special effects created by Westlake and the students.

“We had mirrors on rotating motors that reflected a laser into the dome,” recalled Stanford. “We even created a ‘storm’ inside using a large piece of metal that we shook in the catwalk for thunder and water guns that we shot from behind the back row for rain effects.”

The Sky Club also contributed to the planetarium’s popularity for many years due to an inventive fundraising tactic that raised thousands of dollars for the group. For a few weeks each fall, the group transformed the space into the “Chamber of Horrors” haunted house.

According to Robby Richardson, ’88, of Savannah, working in the haunted house was on his “bucket list” of things to do as a YHC student. He and his friend, Peter Lee, ’88, of



A STAR SCHOLAR

The 1989 *Enotah* yearbook was dedicated to Jimmy Westlake, Young Harris College's first planetarium director and astronomy professor. A news release issued by YHC that year described his numerous contributions: "Perseverance and a quiet

self-confidence enable Mr. Westlake, through an amazing talent for time management, to create and conceptualize new ideas and programs... The planetarium is his laboratory, where he inspires and directs students interested in the sciences... This year he has taken students and faculty to the Huntsville, Alabama Space Center; on a Tektite Hunt to Dodge County; on a Boggs Creek Campout and Star Party; to Canada on an Aurora Borealis Expedition; and to the Discovery Place Science Museum in Charlotte... Jimmy Westlake creates an environment which makes YHC a better institution."

Lawrenceville, both wore the hockey mask from the "Friday the 13th" franchise, strategically popping up in different parts of the chamber.

"People were so scared they never made the connection that I'm a lot taller than Peter. They just assumed it was the same guy playing the slasher icon," Richardson recalled. "I'm not a professional actor, but even I know that's when you have the audience in the palm of your hand."

The club used some of their spoils to fund trips, always eager to experience the sky at different latitudes and altitudes. From camping in the Florida Keys during spring break to hiking to the top of Brasstown Bald at twilight, students marveled at the same vast canopy of twinkling lights from very different viewpoints.

Stanford was reminded of these excursions when he recently traveled from his home in Auburn, Ala., back to his alma mater and took his wife, Lysha, and sons, Andrew, 15, and Trey, 9, to the observatory.

"I had viewed Saturn from the planetarium roof and at Brasstown Bald during my days at YHC, but nobody in my family had seen it before," said Stanford. "They were shocked that you could actually see the rings through the telescope."

Morgan also treated Stanford's family to a planetarium tour and special viewing of the full-dome digital projection system during their visit.

"It's important that my kids see what their dad did in college, and that they have a plethora of experiences so they grow up to be well-rounded individuals," he said. "The planetarium is educational, and they hardly know it because it's so cool. It's truly a gem for the area."

The planetarium is certainly one of the most unique classrooms on campus. "Students get an up-close look at what they are studying," said Morgan, who also heads up the astronomy minor program that includes an immersive internship and upper-level course topics like astrophysics.

Student interns like Jordan Jones, a senior mathematics major from Elko, make presentations during public shows and learn to operate all equipment.

"During planetarium shows, it's neat to project where the moon will be months from now in relation to our location," said Jones. "I've always been fascinated with space, and getting to control such a large telescope at the observatory is an awesome experience."

College interns are also charged with making and executing a planetarium show. Recent YHC graduate Will Harris, '12, of Blairsville, chose to focus on planets discovered by NASA's Kepler space observatory, some of which had yet to be entered into the mapping system.

"Steve and I had to learn together how to program in the stars and planets I needed," Harris said. "It took some work and tweaking, and Steve was such a huge help and completely encouraging the entire time. When I finally finished it and presented the show, it looked so great and I felt incredibly accomplished."

Harris is currently completing a master's degree in vertebrate paleontology at East Tennessee State University, where he is "always able to follow along with any discussions about space and our solar system" thanks to the astronomy minor he completed at YHC.

Interacting with planetarium patrons while assisting with weekly shows was Harris's favorite part of the program. "The people always enjoyed themselves and got such a kick out of looking through the telescope at the observatory," he recalled. "It was fun to be a part of that."

Countless community members like Katie and Jack Gross, of Blairsville, can attest to the thrill of observing the night sky after seeing it projected on the planetarium dome. "Seeing the planets in perspective, it just blows your mind," said Katie.

A correlation to the community—both the campus and surrounding areas—is what sets the YHC stargazing experience apart, from the interactive live segment that starts each show to the time spent with each patron gazing through the telescope.

"I'm fortunate to work in a field that so many people find fascinating and are naturally curious about, with topics like black holes, dwarf planets and exploding stars," said Morgan. "Astronomy is such an appealing field of study because new discoveries are constantly being made."

Indeed, the question posed in the first planetarium show 34 years ago still remains a mystery today. Just as astronomers continue to explore the "final frontier," visitors will keep sitting under the dome at O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium—ready to be transported. ■

MY TOP 3: CELESTIAL EVENTS

YHC Planetarium Director and Instructor of Astronomy Steve Morgan always keeps his eyes on the skies, and he has seen it all—moon phases, meteor showers, eclipses. Here he chronicles the most rare astronomical occurrences he has witnessed at YHC.

1. Transit of Venus

Venus passing directly in front of the Sun is among the rarest of predictable astronomical events. It happened in 2004 and 2012, when I experienced it at YHC. The next one won't occur until 2117, so that was the last time someone from our generation had the opportunity to see it.

2. Total Lunar Eclipse

This is when Earth's shadow completely covers the moon. I always set up telescopes somewhere around Maxwell Center so that many members of the public can witness events like these.

3. Comet PANSTARRS

During Summer Session, my astronomy class set up telescopes at the overlook to view this comet named after the telescope in Hawaii that made its way into the Northern Hemisphere evening sky.

A PIONEERING PARTNERSHIP

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT DEAN

THIS FALL, THREE YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE STUDENTS GOT THEIR HANDS DIRTY WHILE WORKING AT THE PIONEER PROJECT IN BRASSTOWN, N.C., A NEW COMMUNITY PARTNER FOR THE BONNER LEADERS PROGRAM AND CENTER FOR APPALACHIAN STUDIES AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT (CASCE).

Christa Hamill, a freshman English and religious studies major from Hiawassee, Alec Housholder, a junior business and public policy major from Athens, Ga., and Chris Yenney, a freshman outdoor leadership major from Lilburn, learned about seasonal planting and harvesting at Pioneer, a unique gap-year program that focuses on practical homesteading, craft and wilderness expedition skills.

“Bonners get to work with all aspects of life, from people to nature,” said Housholder. “I really enjoyed working with individuals who are truly passionate about the bond between us and the environment.”

Partnering with Pioneer is a natural fit for the Bonners and CASCE, as all three groups are committed to agricultural and environmental sustainability, place-based education, and highlighting the region’s enriching culture.

“The Pioneer Project shares our common values and gives our students an excellent context in which to learn about and engage those ideals,” said CASCE Director and Bonner Leaders Program

Coordinator Rob Campbell.

Hamill and Housholder worked on Pioneer’s web and social media initiatives. In between updating content, blogging and posting Instagram photos, they gravitated to the garden. Part of the “coolest work,” according to Hamill, was planting a vegetable and tending to it until it was primed for picking. “It’s very rewarding—but it is a process,” she said.

Yenney harvested many plants—tomatoes, lemon balm, basil, catnip—and a variety of cover crops to help nourish the soil. The work inspired him to help establish a garden at YHC.

“I have the knowledge and skills to maintain it and hopefully benefit the school by growing organic food that can be used in the dining hall or elsewhere,” he said.

Pioneer works with a plethora of locals who aim to keep Appalachian arts and crafts alive, such as blacksmithing, printmaking and pottery.

The CASCE aims to host lectures, workshops and demonstrations featuring some of these craftspeople, and to incorporate visits to Pioneer into courses offered through the College’s new minor in Appalachian studies and community engagement.

“Being there reminded us that we can leave the world a healthier place for our children than the one we were born into,” said Housholder.

“The people have a hopeful patience for everything they invest into, from student development to the tasty tomatoes they put on the table,” added Hamill. “I hope I can bring some of that back to YHC and start to enjoy the slow processes in the midst of our fast-paced society.”

❖❖ This fall, the CASCE developed a “Swap Shop” that allows students, faculty and staff to donate and take a variety of items in an effort to reduce waste and educate the campus community about reusing and repurposing things.

Housholder and Hamill worked in the garden at The Pioneer Project in Brasstown, N.C.

THE LIST

THE FIRST-YEAR FOUNDATIONS (FYF) PROGRAM IS A GREAT WAY TO BEGIN LIFE AS A YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE STUDENT. Freshmen learn about every aspect of college life from a faculty or staff member along with a peer mentor. The College recently introduced the “YHC Bucket List” that features 100 things to do before graduation to share with all FYF program participants.

Peer mentor Breann Lindsey, a sophomore outdoor leadership major from Lindale, recently asked one of the students from her FYF class, Ashlyn Williams, a freshman communication studies major from Augusta, to check some items off the list. The result was a whirlwind adventure that spanned Bell Mountain, beetles and bags of local produce—all in less than 48 hours.



#2

Go to Cupid Falls.

ASHLYN WILLIAMS: Cupid Falls is one of my favorite places on campus. The beautiful waterfalls are a great place to have fun with friends or just relax and enjoy the tranquility of the water.

BREANN LINDSEY (PICTURED LEFT): This well-known spot is within walking distance from pretty much anywhere on campus, and it's the perfect place to spend an afternoon. The picturesque falls and a quiet place to spend your free time are the perfect combination for a student looking for a little getaway.



#8

Sleep in a hammock.

AW: Having a hammock at Young Harris is essential. They are convenient and portable. After a full day of classes, it's nice to take a break and relax on campus. We set ours up behind Enotah Hall where YHC's Student Government Association recently placed hammock posts.

BL: Hammocks are contagious at YHC. Within two weeks of being here, I purchased my own and started a weekly routine of catnapping outside between classes. It's a great way to mingle with other students and take a break. This spot has the best view because you can see the whole mountain ridgeline that seems to go on forever.



#12

See a show at O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium or visit the YHC Observatory.

AW: Hidden away in a secluded area is one of the largest telescopes used by the College. It's amazing to get to experience the different constellations from this spot up in the beautiful mountains. It's just another perk of being a student at YHC.

BL: The observatory is a hidden gem waiting to be discovered. Many new students don't know about this place that everyone can visit after planetarium shows throughout the year. It's also used for astronomy classes—and who wouldn't want to have class outside in the mountain air? You really do feel like you are among the stars up there in the middle of the mountains.



#36

Hike Bell Mountain.

AW: This would be a great weekend hike to enjoy with a big group of friends. The breathtaking scenery gives you such a great appreciation for the mountains.

BL: When I arrived at Young Harris, the upperclassmen told me the best Saturday morning outing was hiking Bell Mountain. Not only is it a fun trek, but the view is absolutely incredible. It gives you a chance to see the Enchanted Valley from a different perspective.

#49

Visit a farmers' market.

AW: These are great places to meet locals and support their businesses. The owners are friendly, and the produce is delicious. We picked this one because the couple that runs it always sits out there and waves at the passing cars each day.

BL: At almost every corner in Young Harris, you can find a farmers' market. The vendors are always prepared to tell great stories while sending you away with as many bags of vegetables as they can. It's a perfect example of the community making an effort to influence students in a positive way.



#65

Eat at a local restaurant.

AW: Brother's at Willow Ranch in Young Harris came highly recommended by some of my new friends at the College, so I just had to try it. The food is great! It may even be better than your mom's home-cooked meal.

BL: One of the most recommended places for dinner off campus is Brother's. Who can pass up good country cooking just a short drive from the College? I had the pecan-crusted chicken, and it reminded me of something out of my Granny's kitchen. The local restaurants give YHC students a chance to have a good dinner with an at-home feel.



#93

Visit the Predatory Beetle Lab.

AW: The Beetle Lab was really cool. Not only did we learn more about the beetles, we also got to see the Bee Apiary and Garden. It's a great place to get in touch with nature and learn more about protecting it.

BL: Most students only visit this lab located behind campus for class, but it's a great place to check out no matter what your major might be. Students have these unique opportunities to further their knowledge with hands-on experiences that aren't typically found at other colleges.



#99

Visit "Turtle Rock."

AW: This is probably my favorite place to go off campus. It's a popular lookout in Young Harris near Brasstown Valley Resort and the YHC Observatory where you can watch horses roam the fields and take in a beautiful view of the Enchanted Valley during all four seasons.

BL: It's easy for students to make the drive here, and the best time to go is at sunset during the fall. This is definitely one of the most well-known views around Young Harris, and it's easy to see why.

**LIVING LIKE A LOCAL**

From climbing the rock wall in the Recreation and Fitness Center, to taking part in a snowball fight, to ringing the Chapel bell, there are 100 experiences on the "YHC Bucket List" that are not to be missed. Many entries steer students off campus, allowing them to experience the north Georgia mountains in a way that leaves them feeling like locals by the time they don a cap and gown.

#4 Hang out at Towns County Beach.

#11 Hike a portion of the Appalachian Trail.

#16 Go camping.

#19 Walk the wall during finals.

#20 Get up to see the sun rise over the mountains.

#23 Take advantage of the \$1 pancakes at Cottage Deli in Hayesville, N.C.

#30 Visit the Blood Mountain Country Store.

#35 Visit a nearby state park.

#38 Stay at the Hike Inn.

#41 Go tubing in Helen.

#52 Go sledding.

#63 Go thrifting.

#67 Take a road trip with a group of friends.

#68 Attend a local event like Punkin' Chunkin' or the Opossum Drop.

#69 Go to the Georgia Mountain Fair.

#70 Watch a meteor shower.

#72 Hike High Shoals Falls.

#76 Go fly fishing.

#79 Visit the John C. Campbell Folk School.

#91 Raft or kayak down a river.

#95 Play ultimate Frisbee on the lawn.



Students are encouraged to document their experiences using the hashtag #yhcbucketlist.

RAMBLE ON

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DR. PAUL AND LOUISE ARNOLD

A NONDESCRIPT GATE BEHIND ROLLINS HALL ON THE YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE CAMPUS PROVIDES PASSAGE TO A ROUGH AND RUTTED DIRT-GRAVEL ROAD CALLED THE OLD WAGON TRAIL THAT LEADS TO THE HIGHEST POINT IN GEORGIA.

Students take part in this seven-mile hike twice—down the trail during Welcome Week to mark their entrance into the campus community and back up during Commencement to enjoy the annual Vespers Service and reflect on their days at YHC.

When embarking on these traditional treks, it's easy to forget to stop and do some sightseeing along the way. We asked Biology Department Chair and Professor of Biology Paul Arnold, Ph.D., a bona fide botanist who has traversed the trail many times, to point out some of the hike's high points.



Brasstown Bald is generally classified as a "heath bald." This means the vegetation at the summit are predominately members of the "heath family" that includes mountain laurels and rhododendrons—probably the most common shrub found on the trail.



There's a lot of evidence of man-made activity, as a tremendous amount of rock was blasted through to create the Old Wagon Trail that was planned as a continuation of Highway 66 but never saw much use. It was built primarily using convict labor and, despite what many people believe, is not terribly old. You can see dynamite drill marks all along the sheer rock faces on the left as you hike up. One interesting landmark is an old tamping rod that remains wedged in the rock face about two miles down from the summit. It's known to many folks as "Excalibur."



Many interesting florae are found along the trail—like the parasitic "Indian pipes" and poisonous "baneberry." Many of the higher-elevation areas have rock tripe, a type of lichen that covers many of the stones near the summit. It can be cooked and is actually edible. Native Americans and pioneer explorers used it as an emergency ration.



The northern slope is sometimes referred to as a "boulderfield" forest, although it isn't as noticeable as some others in the region because of the prevalence of mountain laurel and rhododendron thickets. The area is often bathed in clouds and has even been called a "cloud forest." This area has vegetation that's more akin to regions farther north like yellow birch, yellowwood, and mountain and striped maples. It's also home to an extraordinarily rare and endangered plant, the "three-toothed cinquefoil."

OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

PHOTOGRAPH BY SCOTT DEAN

IT'S NOT AN EXAGGERATION TO SAY THAT YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE STUDENTS CAN SPEND EVERY WEEKEND OUTDOORS AND NEVER DO THE SAME THING TWICE. FISHING, CAMPING, HIKING, BIKING, KAYAKING, SWIMMING—THERE ARE ENDLESS WAYS TO FIND FUN AND FRESH AIR.

As part of the “YHC Outdoor Adventures” program, students are familiarizing themselves with their home in the north Georgia mountains.

“The purpose of these trips is not only to take students, faculty and staff on exhilarating adventures, but also expose them to the beauty of the area surrounding the College,” explained Associate Vice President for Student Development Bryan Hayse, Ed.D.

The program is an expansion of the successful adventure trips offered to incoming students during START Orientation, including a zip-lining excursion and tubing trip down the Ocoee River.

The fall semester kicked off with a horseback riding session at Brasstown Valley Resort followed by a thrilling whitewater

rafting trip down the Nantahala River. Dozens of students, faculty and staff enjoyed a waterfront picnic on Lake Chatuge at the Hinton Rural Life Center with activities like cornhole, Frisbee and volleyball.

The Office of Student Development also organized outings to seasonal events like the Punkin’ Chunkin’ Festival in Hayesville, N.C., and the John C. Campbell Folk School Fall Festival in Brasstown, N.C.

One of the most popular events was held right on the YHC campus. Nearly 100 students attended a campout and bonfire on the lawn that included a cooking contest and guerrilla theatre-style performance by the Delta Gamma Drama Society.

“My friends hung 10 hammocks in the gazebo,” said Ashley Davenport, a junior biology major from Newnan. “Once the fires dwindled, we grabbed our sleeping bags and drifted off to sleep under the stars talking about how fun the night was.”

More adventures await students next semester. A skiing excursion is already in the works, along with a spring break service trip to the Hike Inn, a sustainably designed Georgia state park in the Chattahoochee National Forest.



Students enjoyed a horseback riding session at Brasstown Valley Resort during Welcome Week this fall.

GO FISH

BY PEGGY COZART
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT DEAN AND JESSICA LARSON



LEFT Peeler and Rutherford reeled in some bass on Lake Chatuge during the Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship. **RIGHT** Spectators cheered on their teams as anglers waited to weigh in their catches on campus.

IT'S OFTEN SAID THAT THE EARLY BIRD GETS THE WORM.

On most weekend mornings, Young Harris College senior biology major and bass fishing team member Joe Thompson, of Clayton, is up and out well before the birds—or the worms, for that matter.

“The light starts to break. There’s fog. You start to hear everything come to life,” said Thompson, who often reaches for his fishing rod as early as 4 a.m. “It’s the perfect picture of serenity for me. It’s very quiet. No wind, just the calm of the morning.”

Such is the life of a competitive fisherman. Thompson is one half of a team, rounded out by fellow senior biology major Grayson Payne, of Blairsville, who recently finished fifth at the 2013 FLW College Fishing Southeast Regional Championship, securing a spot at the national championship in 2014.

Thompson revealed a philosophical bent when describing the “ever-changing challenge” of fishing. “You can never completely figure out the fish,” he said. “You have to be completely in the zone. My best therapy is getting out on the water because it helps me get over hardships and clears my mind.”

Payne, who joked that he likes the sport because “there’s no running or jumping involved,” described the rush of casting his line and hoping for a fish to bite. “Your heart races. You’re just waiting on one to swim by and get hungry. When it does, it’s going

to be time to pull one in.”

Founding member of the team and recent YHC graduate Brad Rutherford, ’13, of Lavonia, knows the feeling well. He helped the team consistently score podium finishes and top national rankings since their debut in 2009.

Most recently, Rutherford and teammate Matthew Peeler, ’13, of Williamson, finished second overall in the 2013 Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship that was hosted by YHC on Lake Chatuge—the first time the national event was held outside of Arkansas.

“As I traveled all over the country competing, I began talking about this amazing lake we have by our College and how good the fishing is. I started showing everyone pictures of the fish I caught on Chatuge,” explained Rutherford, who led YHC’s team to a 10th-place finish in the championship in 2012.

This led College Series Manager Hank Weldon to contact Rutherford about the prospect of hosting a national championship on the lake that would put YHC front and center in the arena of collegiate bass fishing. The event received national television coverage from ESPNU, and a sizable crowd gathered each day to watch the weigh-ins on the plaza.

“I could not be more proud of our bass fishermen or of the College. We had an incredible week hosting the championship



and enjoyed showing off our beautiful campus and surrounding area,” said YHC President Cathy Cox. “YHC’s bass fishing program is a huge asset to our community, and I am so proud of our team that continues to grow and thrive.”

The three-day competition included 68 two-angler teams that represented 49 colleges and universities from across the United States. The YHC team ended the first day in third place and finished fourth on the second day before the top five teams battled it out on the final day of competition.

Peeler and Rutherford led the final weigh-in with close to 13 pounds but ultimately fell short to Auburn University at Montgomery for the championship prize after the accumulative weights were tallied.

While fishing on familiar waters had its advantages, Peeler also pointed out that the position added some pressure on the team to make their fans proud.

“We stayed confident in our abilities and our knowledge of the lake. We knew what was on the line, and we were able to execute,” he said. “More than anything, we were so excited to represent the school. Almost every competitor had nothing but good things to say about the area and YHC, which is a huge testament to what kind of place it is.”

“Matt and I appreciated the support we saw from YHC and the surrounding community, and I hope to see that continue for many years to come,” added Rutherford. “I’m glad to know we put Young Harris on the map—even if I did get the most national media coverage for jumping out of my boat.” (*See sidebar on page 49.*)

In addition to making a splash on ESPN’s “Not Top 10” by sacrificing a dry uniform to retrieve a sinking rod, the duo also gained attention by earning the opportunity to represent YHC by competing individually in the Carhartt Bassmaster College Bracket Championship on Spring Lake in Michigan in September.

The team approached the tournament the same way they do any new territory—by spending time on the water from daybreak to dark with maps and electronics, trying to deduce any activity and patterns. When Peeler found a spot in practice he thought had some potential, he found it full of salmon. “I guess salmon and bass don’t mix,” he joked.

Peeler and Rutherford ultimately came up short, landing in fifth and seventh place, respectively. “This contest was an unbelievable way to cap off the season. It’s just been an awesome experience,” said Peeler, while Rutherford succinctly summed it up: “It’s been a fun ride, and I am truly going to miss it.”

The sport of collegiate bass fishing is growing quickly, with hundreds of teams gaining a large fan base and garnering airtime on the ESPN and Discovery television networks. There are several “trails” of competition, including the FLW Bass Fishing League and the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.) Bassmaster series.

Because YHC’s team is organized as a club sport, the members rely on contributions from supporters to help cover expenses when they compete. By hosting benefit tournaments and children’s fishing derbies, the team gets a chance to raise money while catching up with fishermen from the surrounding community.

“It’s really rewarding. I love to see someone new fishing,” said Thompson. Payne added that the camaraderie of fishing is part of the appeal: “You get to be with people who all have the same love of fishing. We spend hours working on rods and telling fish stories.”

Competing on the team has given members the opportunity to travel and fish all over the country, but Thompson is quick to point out “there is something about the mountains here that is special.”

Payne is a firm believer that the large, healthy fish population in Lake Chatuge is due to the notable geography of the area. “All the water runs off the mountains, allowing plenty of nutrients to flow down as well,” he reasoned.

The team’s advisor, Assistant Professor of Biology Johnathan Davis, Ph.D., makes it a goal for the YHC anglers to raise awareness for natural resources due to his belief that “a conservation ethic can grow through the experience of fishing.”

Thompson, who estimated he fishes around 200 days a year, always looks forward to his next trip to the lake, whether casting alone from the shore or in full competition mode.

“I used to get nervous at the big tournaments,” he said, noting the electric atmosphere of energizing music blaring as 100 boats or more await the signal to start fishing. “It can look like a city on the water. But then you realize it’s just fishing. It’s all for fun.” ■



Peeler and Rutherford displayed their catches, spoke to the press and showed off trophies signifying their second-place finish at the Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship hosted by the College.



Matthew Peeler, '13, and Brad Rutherford, '13, caught 15 of the tournament's 489 fish for a total three-day haul of 36 pounds, 8 ounces.



MAN OVERBOARD!

YHC bass fishing team members Brad Rutherford, '13, and Matthew Peeler, '13, made a splash on ESPN's "Not Top 10" with a hilarious—and successful—attempt to snag a sinking fishing rod after making a big catch during the 2013 Carhartt Bassmaster College Series National Championship on Lake Chatuge.

Watch the clip @ yhc.edu/bassfishing.





Candace Edwards, of Mount Saint George, Tobago, Kristen Dippold, of Thebes, Ill., and Alex Bitok, of Kapsabet, Kenya, posed at Cupid Falls.

MAKING A MOVE

BY MICHAEL MACEACHERN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT DEAN

Nearly 300 student-athletes from Young Harris College's 15 sports teams call the Enchanted Valley their home away from home. Some came from just down the street, while others traveled here from distant lands. Some fell in love during a tour, while others never saw the campus until they arrived. All of them came to be part of something special.

We sat down with seven student-athletes representing basketball, cross country, competitive cheerleading and soccer who are in the midst of Peach Belt Conference competition this fall to find out what it was like to make the move to the mountains.

ONE GIANT LEAP

It's around a 20-hour flight from Melbourne, Australia, to Atlanta, not including the two-hour drive north to YHC. That kind of distance is the reason many international student-athletes, like Steve Viterbo, a junior communication studies major from Melbourne, Australia, and Breanna Gleeson, a senior business and public policy major from Adelaide, Australia, never set foot on campus before choosing to become a Mountain Lion.

When Viterbo heard about the chance to restart an American college basketball program through his coach overseas—who just so happened to be close friends with Men's Basketball Head Coach Pete Herrmann—he was intrigued.

"My coach told me it was a great opportunity," said Viterbo, who did some research on the College's website. "Everything was done by word of mouth. There was no film or video. It was a leap of faith on both ends. I said I would give it a shot, and it's worked out well for me."

On a recommendation from a scout, fellow Aussie Gleeson sent recruiting videos to colleges throughout the United States. The sport remained in the background until she heard from Women's Basketball Head Coach Brenda Paul while working on an architecture engineering degree.

"It was a 'why not?' kind of a deal for me. I decided to take a chance," Gleeson explained. "When I left, my mum said it was just a flight back home if it didn't work out." She initially planned on staying one year, but that notion soon changed. "I knew my time wasn't done," she said. "The team had just gotten started, and I was a leader. That's something I take pride in."

Word of mouth also brought men's cross country runner Alex

Bitok, a junior biology major from Kapsabet, Kenya, to YHC. “One of my friends from back home came here before me,” he explained. “I would never have known about the opportunity to run at YHC if he hadn’t told me about it.”

An affinity for the YHC coaching staff made coming to the College an easy choice for soccer players Niall McCabe, a junior communication studies major from Dublin, Ireland, and Candace Edwards, a senior psychology major from Mount Saint George, Tobago.

When McCabe traveled to Memphis, Tenn., to compete in a soccer showcase in 2010, he met fellow Emerald Isle native, Men’s Soccer Head Coach Mark McKeever. “I knew what he wanted to build here,” McCabe explained. “It took some time, but last season and this season proved we can beat anyone in the conference and in the nation.”

Edwards listed Women’s Soccer Head Coach Kathy Brown as the best part about playing soccer at YHC. “The conference is competitive, and I love my coach and my team,” she said.

Student-athletes who reside stateside often have the luxury of a campus tour. Women’s cross country runner Kristen Dippold, a junior outdoor leadership major from Thebes, Ill., was led south after one fateful Google search found a school with a “non-traditional classroom setting and professors who are dedicated to helping students learn and grow.”

Dippold originally planned to study graphic design closer to home. “I kept thinking about how I was going to be at a computer my whole life, and I didn’t think I could do that,” she recalled. “My major brought me here, and getting to run competitively has been a huge bonus.”

Revon Magee, a junior business and public policy major from Miramar, Fla., and member of the competitive cheerleading team, “fell in love” with YHC after making the trek north to check out the campus. Like Viterbo, he was drawn to the prospect of starting a new program to add to the College’s athletics offerings.

“I picked YHC because of the small environment,” said Magee. “It felt like home. You really don’t get that at many schools.”

RULES OF THE GAME

Balancing a full course load with countless practices and games brings its own set of challenges. Many Mountain Lions also have to adjust to attending classes that aren’t taught in their native tongue while playing a familiar sport in a foreign setting.

In addition to calling the game they always knew as “football” a whole different name, McCabe and Edwards also had to adjust to the different perception of their beloved sport in the United States.

“In Tobago, soccer is huge. People actually look forward to the start of soccer season there. The professional and semi-pro leagues are very intense and exciting,” said Edwards, who is a member of the country’s women’s national team.

While Viterbo and Gleeson both hail from Australia’s southern border, their perceptions of basketball back home are very different.

Viterbo cited the sport’s popularity, particularly at the junior level (equivalent of high school). He also noted that the NBA is becoming more mainstream, with American games regularly airing on television. “In the basketball community, coming to the U.S. to play college ball is very sought after,” he said. “A lot

of players try to get scholarships and are unsuccessful, so I felt lucky to have this chance.”

Gleeson, on the other hand, recalled her teachers struggling to understand why she missed class for basketball. She even opted to play netball instead. “Dribbling isn’t allowed, and my mum saw that I looked like I wanted to keep going with the ball instead of stopping and passing it all the time,” she said. “After some time and persuading, I gave basketball a real shot and never looked back.”

SETTING A STRIDE

“YHC gave me the opportunity to get a degree while doing something I love and getting to see a different part of the world,” said McCabe, echoing the sentiment of many international student-athletes. While most college campuses provide a change of scenery, YHC’s location takes that experience to a whole different level.

Edwards and McCabe both recalled adjusting to the new climate. “It was much cooler than I was used to. At home, it’s always warm,” said Edwards. McCabe had a different take. “The weather was way warmer here,” he said. “It took a while for my body to adjust to it.”

Bitok and Dippold both hailed from hometowns with flat land and had to adapt to the new altitude. “It was not mountainous at all where I went to school in Kenya, so it was a bit of an adjustment with the hills here,” said Bitok.

Dippold got acclimated to the terrain by taking to trails around campus at Meeks Park, Jackrabbit and Miller Trek. “I’m still in awe of the mountains and how they change when the sun hits them and the leaves change colors—or when there is snow on top or fog hanging in the valley,” she said. “Even though they change, they’re still the same. It gives me a sense of security.”

Many student-athletes agreed that finding the words to explain the region to family and friends often proves difficult. The phrase “the middle of nowhere” was common, but always with the clarification that those words don’t carry a negative connotation.

“It’s just hard to explain YHC to people who have never been here because a description or photograph can’t do it justice,” explained McCabe. “The views of the surrounding mountains are incredible, whether from the top of Enotah Hall or down at the soccer field. It’s always nice to take a minute to appreciate where we are and also how fortunate we are.”

Viterbo said the “relaxing feel” of the scenery provided a welcome change from the city life he left behind. “I tell people the remote area keeps me out of trouble and focused on school and basketball,” he said. “My teammates rely on each other a lot more to keep each other entertained—so, in a way, it keeps us closer.”

“IT’S JUST HARD TO EXPLAIN YHC TO PEOPLE WHO HAVE NEVER BEEN HERE BECAUSE A DESCRIPTION OR PHOTOGRAPH CAN’T DO IT JUSTICE.”

NIALL MCCABE

TEAM SPIRIT

From hiking up mountains to hitting up thrift stores, many teammates spend time off the field and court experiencing their new home together. Many team traditions are focused on the campus or the surrounding area.

Homecoming is always a memorable occasion for the basketball teams, according to Gleeson. "Painting the school purple is so amazing and fun, especially because so many alumni come back to campus," she said. "The amount of support we get from the community during that event and throughout the season is so valuable."

The women's basketball team also started a ritual during Christmas break of holding a party for all of the student-athletes still on campus. "We all get dressed up, we eat and make gingerbread houses, and we even come up with a dance routine to perform," Gleeson said.

The cheerleading team holds a scavenger hunt on campus each year. "We run around campus together, and it's a big bonding experience," said Magee. "Even though there isn't much in Young Harris besides the campus, the people here keep you occupied with fun things to do."

From playing the soccer video game FIFA in their residence halls on chilly winter weekends to hitting the "beach" in Hiawassee on Lake Chatuge during warm summer months, the men's soccer team finds ways to hang out no matter what the season.

"The area allows us as a team to bond in ways many other schools can't. After practice during the preseason, we hang out and get to know each other better," said McCabe. "Being so secluded also allows us to really focus on soccer and not let any distractions take us away from our goals."

The cross country team makes conditioning more engaging by holding "adventure runs"—a runner's version of "follow the leader" through fields, creeks, puddles and mud. "By the end of it, we are tired, wet and dirty, but those are definitely the best practices," said Dippold. "Jumping in the creeks and rivers and hiking up the mountains to see the views are fun things we get to do together."

When asked the best part about attending YHC, most student-athletes talked about the people they have met. Words like "nice," "caring," "helpful" and "friendly" came up often and were used to describe both the locals and members of the campus community.

"The old-timey country feel that people from home always thought was just in the movies is actually real life," said Gleeson. "People are always willing to lend a hand or help you in any way they can, whether it be a ride to the store or inviting you to stay with their families for holidays," added McCabe.

Bitok and Edwards agreed that bigger is not always better, and the benefits of a close-knit campus also extend into the classroom.

"I like that fact that it's a small campus and there aren't a lot of distractions. I'm able to settle in and focus while getting a lot of one-on-one attention," said Edwards. "I like that Young Harris is small," added Bitok. "Everything I need is right here." ■

Revon Magee, of Miramar, Fla., Breanna Gleeson, of Adelaide, Australia, Niall McCabe, of Dublin, Ireland, and Steve Viterbo, of Melbourne, Australia, stood near the entrance to the Old Wagon Trail behind campus.



SOFTBALL AND WOMEN'S TENNIS TEAMS LOOK TO NEW LEADERSHIP



SOFTBALL: AILEEN MORALES

New Young Harris College head softball coach Aileen Morales has big plans—like taking her team to the top of the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division II.

"I want to build this program into the best in the state, then the region and onto a national scale," she said. "It's been successful, but we can take it further."

Morales brings a strong pedigree to the Mountain Lions as a former Georgia Tech softball player and assistant coach. An All-American for the Yellow Jackets with a degree in management, she led the team to three Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) championships.

"Aileen is a knowledgeable coach with great communication skills—the right fit for YHC to be a conference contender," said Director of Athletics Randy Dunn. "Having a coach with her experience, passion and positivity provides our program with the leadership necessary for a successful future."

The Columbus native was a three-time All-ACC, All-Region and ESPN The Magazine Academic All-District pick. She's third in ACC history in runs scored (216) and holds the top spots in Tech's record books for stolen bases (154), games started (265) and at bats (850).

"The state and the whole southeastern region have great softball. Travel ball teams from programs in our backyard have won national championships," Morales said. "I think we can get some of the best players to come to YHC."

A second-round pick by the Chicago Bandits during the National Pro Fastpitch draft, Morales led the team to the 2008 championship. She competed internationally on the Puerto Rican National Team before coaching the squad to an eighth-place finish at the 2012 International Softball Federation World Championship.

She looks forward to bringing her winning history to YHC. "The support from the College administration and athletics staff is unmatched," she said. "They are dedicated to helping me build this program—they believe in our team."



WOMEN'S TENNIS: CAMMIE NIX

Cammie Nix spent two seasons in Spartanburg, S.C., as the men's and women's tennis assistant coach at the University of South Carolina (USC) Upstate before becoming the women's tennis head coach at YHC—a place she said "has so much to offer."

"During my first visit to campus, I was blown away by the facilities and how helpful and friendly everyone on campus was," she recalled.

"The tennis complex is one of the nicest I've ever seen on a college campus, and I look forward to spending time there furthering our program."

Nix served as the women's tennis assistant coach at the University of Alabama at Birmingham for two years prior to joining USC Upstate. Last season, the Spartans went 14-8 in women's tennis—a seven-win improvement from 2012—and advanced to the Atlantic Sun Conference semifinals.

"Cammie's experience as a NCAA Division I student-athlete and her years of coaching at that level will provide our team with the leadership necessary to make a name for themselves in a highly competitive conference," said Dunn.

Before entering the coaching ranks, Nix was a four-season starter at Birmingham-Southern College where she received degrees in biology and psychology. She earned team MVP honors for the 2005 and 2006 seasons, racking up Big South Conference Presidential Honor Roll accolades each year.

With only three players returning from last season's team that won a record 16 matches, Nix has hit the ground running at YHC. "I'm hoping to bring in some strong players for the spring," she said. "My main focus is developing the group of players we have and making them even better."

NEARING THE FINISH LINE

Young Harris College is one step closer to becoming full members of the National Collegiate Athletic Association's (NCAA) Division II. In



July, the Mountain Lions entered the last year of candidacy of the three-year process and expect to finalize the transition in time for the 2014-2015 season.

"It's been a long transition, and now we can finally see the light," said Women's Soccer Head Coach and Assistant Director of Athletics for Community Involvement Kathy Brown. "We've had plenty of time to embrace the rules and regulations, and we all feel very prepared for the NCAA."

During the final provisional year, YHC is functioning like a full-fledged NCAA institution including completion of all necessary paperwork, compliance with all rules and regulations, and adherence to recruiting and scheduling guidelines.

Women's cross country runner Nicole Smith, a sophomore from Ball Ground, said Division II is the perfect place for the College's student-athletes. "It's a good mix of being able to concentrate on academics, compete in your sport and enjoy college life," she explained.

During the 2013-2014 season, the Mountain Lions continue to be eligible for all Peach Belt Conference (PBC) awards and regular-season championships without automatic bids. As full NCAA Division II members, YHC will be eligible for national competition.

"I love being part of the PBC and can't wait to climb to the top of the conference," said Brown, echoing the sentiment of many coaches and student-athletes. "I look forward to the opportunity to go to regionals and nationals," added Smith. "And I plan on making it."

MOUNTAIN LIONS ROUNDUP

YHC saw 155 student-athletes named to the PBC Presidential Honor Roll, with 42 Gold Scholars—more than any other PBC institution. + The cheerleading team earned a bid to the National Cheerleading Association (NCA) Collegiate Cheer and Dance Championship next April in Daytona Beach, Fla. + **Jarred Howell**, a senior from Nicholson, and **Jessica Haas**, a freshman from Lisle, Ill., were the first cheerleaders named NCA All-Americans in the program's history. + Outfielder **Zach Bricknell**, '13, of Woodstock, was named to the American Baseball Coaches Association/Rawlings NCAA Division II All-America First Team—a first for the College in any sport. + Bricknell was also named to the National Collegiate Baseball Writers Association NCAA Division II All-America Second Team and designated the NCAA Division II "National Hitter of the Week" on May 8. + Bricknell and catcher/infielder **Jack Morrow**, a junior from Carneys Point, N.J., were named to the All-PBC First Team. + YHC outfielder **David Atwood**, a senior from Waynesville, N.C., was the College's first-ever student-athlete named to the NCAA Division II Academic All-America First Team. + Midfielder **Taylor Lincoln**, a sophomore from Kennesaw, was named to the Division II All-Independent Women's Lacrosse First Team, while midfielder **Jacklyn Kernohan**, a sophomore from Whitby, Ontario, Canada, and defender **Ivey Franklin**, a sophomore from Buford, were Second Team selections. All three were named to the Division II All-Independent freshmen team. + The women's tennis team finished the 2013 season ranked No. 36 in the NCAA Division II by the Intercollegiate Tennis Association after winning a record 16 matches. + **Jane Plevako**, a sophomore from Astana, Kazakhstan, was named to the All-PBC women's tennis First Team in singles and Second Team in doubles, while teammate **Charlotte Dawson**, a sophomore from Odessa, Texas, was named to the Second Team for singles and doubles.



HOWELL
& HAAS



BRICKNELL



ATWOOD



LINCOLN



PLEVAKO

SOCCER & LACROSSE TEAMS PLAY ON NEW TURF

On Oct. 26, the men's soccer team stepped onto the Soccer and Lacrosse Field ready to play their first National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) match on the new AstroTurf® that was installed this fall.

The Mountain Lions christened the field with a win, besting the University of North Carolina at Pembroke 5-2. The victory helped the team climb to a No. 1 national ranking and clinch the first regular season Peach Belt Conference (PBC) title in the program's history.

Junior communication studies major Niall McCabe, of Dublin, Ireland, played a role in every goal during the game. As a result of his top-notch performance, he was named the PBC's Men's Soccer AstroTurf® Player of the Week and Disney Sports/NSCAA NCAA Division II National Men's Soccer Player of the Week.

The synthetic turf is outlined in "YHC purple" and features the mountain lion logo at center field with the NCAA and PBC logos displayed on either side.

ALUMNI RISE TO THE CHALLENGE

MANY ALUMNI WERE ABLE TO ATTEND YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE BECAUSE SOMEONE CARED ENOUGH TO PROVIDE THEM WITH FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE. NOW, THEY HAVE THE CHANCE TO PAY IT FORWARD—WHILE ALSO ENGAGING IN A LITTLE FRIENDLY COMPETITION.

The 2013-2014 Class Scholarship Challenge will officially kick off in January, but many alumni from across the generations are already rallying together to help deserving students attend their alma mater.

“Most alumni have been the recipients of gifts from others throughout the College’s history,” said Phil DeMore, ’63, of Clarksville. “Each person reaches a point when they are able to give back. It’s the least we can do.”

Sixty classes participated in last year’s challenge, and 15 surpassed the \$1,000 goal. More than \$56,000 was raised, representing an increase of more than \$20,000 from the inaugural challenge held in 2011-2012.

The Class of 1952 was the winner for the second year in a row, followed by the Class of 1963—who were celebrating their 50th reunion—and the Class of 1947.

Even former students who were able to fund their YHC experience without scholarship assistance like Charlotte Sparks McCloskey, ’64, of Big Canoe, consider it “a privilege” to encourage and support future generations of alumni.

“I am so thankful that I got to attend YHC, and I will do anything I can to make sure students have the same experience,” she said. “The atmosphere is just wonderful. When I was a student, the professors knew me by name, even my nickname, and that meant a lot to me.”

Larry Demby, ’63, of Young Harris, participates in the challenge because he wants to help students in the same position he was 50 years ago. “I could have used a little help to get by,” he said. “Anything we can do to help students stay in school is so important.”

Alumni giving has drastically risen as a result of the challenge and allowed classes to reconnect while banding together to support the effort.

Any alumni interested in participating can make a gift now marked for the Class Scholarship Challenge, make a gift online at yhc.edu/giving or call the Office of Advancement at (800) 241-3754 or (706) 379-5173.



ABOVE Aaron O’Tuel, a senior business and public policy major from Hartwell, is pictured with Class Coordinator and Alumni Board member Jane Harrell Roberts, ’60. **LEFT** Alumni Board member Charlotte Sparks McCloskey, ’64, met with scholarship recipient Breann Lindsey, a sophomore outdoor leadership major from Lindale, at the YHC Scholarship Luncheon held on campus in November.

CLASSES WHO SURPASSED \$1,000:

1930	1961
1947	1962
1952	1963
1955	1967
1958	1975
1959	1978
1960	1979

Classes who have consecutively achieved their goal are denoted in purple.

“I am very thankful to be the recipient of funding through the Class Scholarship Challenge. The financial assistance I have received is providing me with the opportunity to enjoy Young Harris College’s beautiful campus, excellent professors and unique atmosphere. I’m happy to be able to go to a school that invests in its students in such a way to help them succeed.”

AARON O’TUEL
RECIPIENT OF THE MR. AND MRS.
THOMAS E. HARRELL SCHOLARSHIP

NO PLACE LIKE HOME

BY KRYSTIN DEAN

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT DEAN

“I left Young Harris College, but it never left me.” Trustee Ray Lambert, ’77, echoed the sentiment of many alumni who remain under the spell of the Enchanted Valley long after they graduate.

His YHC experience is characterized by time spent in spots surrounding the campus as much as on it. His laundry list of favorite hangouts is catalogued using locals-only lingo: “the Place, the Rowdy Ho, the Beach, the Dam.” It’s hard to believe that when he came to YHC from Atlanta in 1975, he knew nothing about these places—or his future alma mater, for that matter.

The way Lambert tells it, he was “just coming off banishment” from working at a rock quarry in San Antonio, Texas, and hadn’t been home more than a day when his father told him to pack his things. “He said, ‘Follow me. I’m taking you to where you’re going to college.’”

Lambert was reluctant to leave the big city at first, commuting home on weekends. All that changed when he joined the Phi Chi fraternity and got involved in intramural sports. “We provided our own entertainment,” he explained. “We had the advantage of no cell phones, no laptops. We had to interact with each other, and I found some great folks as a result.”

Every road—whether paved, dirt or gravel—holds a memory for Lambert. He will never forget “kidnapping” Emeritus Professor of Accounting O.V. Lewis with a friend and ending up on top of Bell Mountain or running off the road in his old 4x4 truck on Crooked Creek Road with his pledge brother, David Renz, ’76.

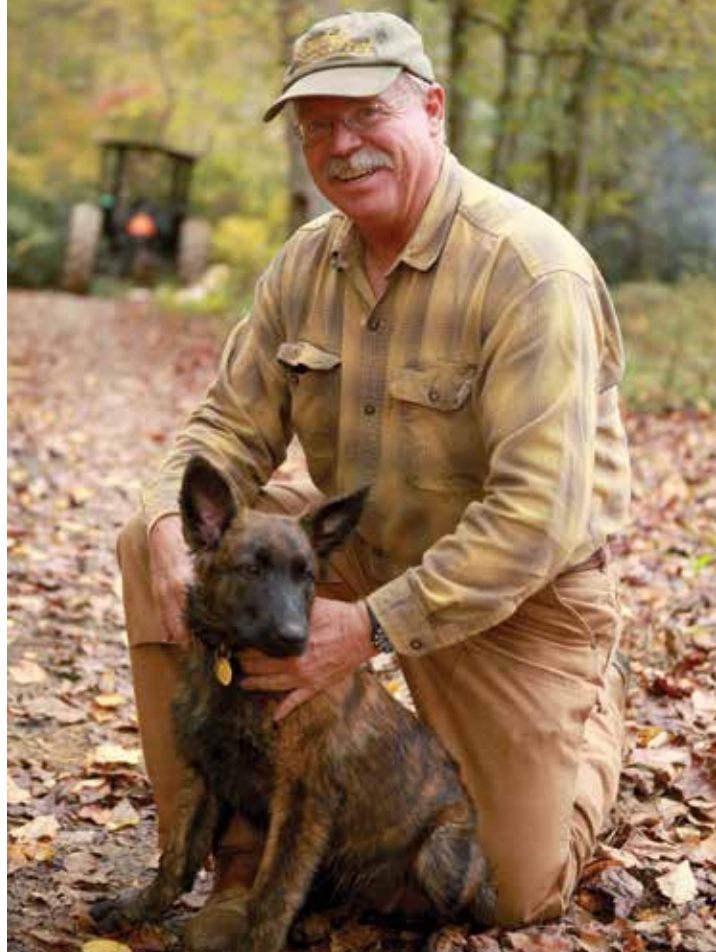
“I had to walk to the farmer’s house to get him to unlock the gate. He was mad and said we were going to have to fix his fence before he let us out,” Lambert recalled. “He was shocked when I told him we didn’t touch his fence. We went over it.”

His exploits inside the classroom were equally entertaining thanks to engaging professors like Emeritus Professor of Biology Todd Kimsey and Emeritus Professor of History and Psychology James Hale, Ed.D., who also served as his Phi Chi advisor.





LEFT Lambert enjoyed the view from his second home on Lake Chatuge. **ABOVE AND RIGHT** Lambert and his son, Rip, welded pieces for a new barn on his 70-acre farm that is home to many animals including several dogs and a mule.



"It was great having close connections with our teachers," he said. "The classes were small and allowed for a lot of interaction. There was no sitting in the back of the classroom and hiding. The professors pushed you to be an active participant."

That mentality has stayed with Lambert, who currently serves as president of The Lambert Company based in McDonough. He joined YHC's Board of Trustees in 2007—a family tradition, as his late father, Ray, previously served on the board from 1988 to 2003.

"Everyone is so dedicated and loves Young Harris as much as I do," said Lambert, who enjoys getting to know members of the group who didn't attend the College. "It's wonderful to see how committed and excited they are. Sometimes I think they're a little jealous of us chosen few—the band of brothers and sisters of YHC."

He remains grateful to his father for making him part of that special circle, and for encouraging him to venture beyond it. "My dad told me I would meet some great people, and many of them would be locals," Lambert said. "I still love being up there with the folks who have been my friends for more than half of my life."

Former Georgia Governor Sonny Perdue appointed Lambert to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Board of Directors in 2007. He has chaired the environmental protection committee for the last four years, pursuing his interest in preserving the state's wildlife and natural resources.

"I believe environmental sustainability and economic sustainability can and need to coexist," he said. "I've been involved in many of the land acquisitions and water and air issues. I always emphasize that the federal government doesn't put Georgia at a disadvantage with sister states with some of their environmental laws."

His membership with the North Georgia Mountains Authority, a subset of the DNR, was also a natural fit considering his connection to the region. "It's an arm of the state used to boost economic

development, and it really is a great economic engine for the area," he said.

Since he always thought of Young Harris as a second home, Lambert decided to plant permanent roots in the area around a decade ago. He found a home on Lake Chatuge where he could spend time on the water with his wife, Mary Lynn, and their three children, Ansley, '08, Sadie and Rip, a junior outdoor leadership major at the College.

"I enjoy the hometown feel, the seclusion and the quiet. No sirens, no traffic," Lambert explained. "The fall is my favorite time to ride up there—the campfires, the leaves, the smells, all the things I enjoyed as a student."

When he started looking for a place to build a small farm, Lambert's friend and mentor, Dr. Hale, suggested land his brother had for sale bordering a narrow stretch of the Chattahoochee National Forest.

He soon wanted some additional acreage to keep his mules and horses, and again turned to "Doc and Mama Hale" who had some land available. "I worked with him cutting firewood and working on the roads during the summer when I was in school, so I knew the property," said Lambert.

He gifted the College with a 7,000-pound fire pit in 2010 that's used for the annual Homecoming bonfire—ensuring that current and future generations of students have a place to enjoy his favorite season in the mountains.

"Current YHC students like Rip are getting to further their education and make lifelong friendships with the great outdoors right at their front door, just like I did," he said. "This valley that is surrounded by national forest in a pristine environmental setting will always have that same mountain charm."

MOUNTAIN LIVING

MANY MEMBERS OF YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE'S BOARD OF TRUSTEES HAVE MADE HOMES IN THE MAJESTIC MOUNTAINS OF NORTH GEORGIA, SEEKING SOLACE IN THE ENTRANCING AREAS SURROUNDING THE CAMPUS. FIND OUT WHAT INSPIRED THESE YHC DEVOTEES TO STAY CONNECTED TO AND INVESTED IN THE REGION.

PAUL BECKHAM, '63

CHAIRMAN, HOPE-BECKHAM, INC.

My first exposure to the mountains was during my student days at YHC. After moving to Atlanta, starting a family and many years of intense work, I started returning to the mountains to visit my good friend, Richard McGinnis. Those visits rekindled my enjoyment of the mountains, and I purchased a place in the Trackrock area in 1984. The home has provided a meeting place for our family for many years as they attended college and had their own children. It has expanded to roughly 100 acres, and it's the perfect place to relieve the stresses of city living.



Trackrock area that we split with our friends from Douglasville. We don't get up there as much as we would like—I retired a few years ago but that didn't last long. We love having a place to stay when we come up for College events like basketball games and Homecoming. We go golfing, enjoy the local restaurants and sit around the fire. Fall is great, but you can't beat springtime up there either. We try to have family gatherings whenever we can, and our friends also love staying there.

JAMES "JIM" JOHNSTON, '70

ATTORNEY, JAMES T. JOHNSTON, JR., P. C.

My father's family moved to Clay County in the early 1890s after my great-grandfather sold his 300-acre family farm in Asheville, N.C., to George Vanderbilt. That land is now part of the Biltmore Estate. He used the money from the sale to purchase a farm located near the new courthouse in Hayesville, N.C. As a YHC student, I discovered some of that family history and developed an interest in the area. I thought I might retire there someday to have a place for my children to spend time away from Atlanta city life. I bought my own property in the Tusquittee Valley in 2001. The log cabin structure, situated on around eight acres next to Tusquittee Creek, was an empty shell with no plumbing, electricity or water when I purchased it. I finished it over the next two years and have used it continuously since then.



CLAIR FRAZIER, '81

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER

The College and the surrounding area are truly enchanted. My father, who currently lives in Hiawassee, strongly influenced my decision to attend Young Harris. Fourteen people from my high school graduating class in Demorest also chose YHC, which is a powerful statement about the area and school. I first walked onto the campus in the fall of 1978 and have been in awe ever since. My husband and I decided to make a second home in nearby Mineral Bluff in 2001. I still have a deep passion for the College and the mountains that surround it. To this day, there is a spirit you feel when arriving on campus—one that will always be in the valley.



ROBERT "BOB" HEAD, '59

PRESIDENT, HEAD-WESTGATE CORPORATION

I moved with my parents to the mountains in 1948 at the age of nine, but left the area when I was 12 to live with another family in Marianna, Fla. I returned to the mountains and graduated from Union County High School in 1957. I was fortunate to be awarded a work scholarship at YHC—I logged hours on the College's farm and Grace Rollins Dining Hall. I am so grateful for the opportunities I received from YHC, and I will always be indebted to the College for giving me a real chance in life.



RICHARD MCGINNIS

OWNER, MCGINNIS ADVERTISING AND TURNER COMMUNICATIONS (RETIRED)

As a child, my relatives in Atlanta brought my family to Vogel State Park one year, and I fell in love with its setting and the fall colors. After marrying my wife, Shirley, I was quick to show her Vogel, and she shared the love I had. Our children came along, and we enjoyed camping at both Vogel and Trackrock. We eventually bought 11 acres of nice mountain land and built a basic cabin with three bedrooms. Since that first summer, we have tilled a garden each year and Shirley always "puts up" a good bit to eat. Our home in Trackrock is the nerve center of our mountain life. We try to be part of the community and still retain our home in Johns Creek. As it has worked out, we enjoy the best of both worlds.



HENRY "HANK" HUCKABY, '62

CHANCELLOR, BOARD OF REGENTS, UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF GEORGIA

My wife, Amy, '62, and I treasure the time we spent in Young Harris together as students and always wanted to come back. We got a house in the



ZELL MILLER, '51

FORMER U.S. SENATOR & GEORGIA GOVERNOR



I was born on campus when my parents lived in a faculty house. My mother taught art at the College and my father taught history. In 1932, my father passed away when I was only a few days old. I grew up in a house in Young Harris built from hundreds of beautiful, smooth rocks my mother had hauled out of a nearby creek. In certain places, her handprints are still visible in the concrete. She wanted to remain in Young Harris so that my siblings and I would know who our father was and who my father's people were. She was afraid that if we went back to her home state of South Carolina, we may never get back to Young Harris or know our father's heritage. Young Harris has been my home for 81 years now, and there was never a question that this is where I would end up living. It's very special to me because of the history I have here.

JIMMY TALLENT, '70

PRESIDENT & CEO, UNITED COMMUNITY BANKS, INC.



In 1984, I moved my family from Atlanta to Blairsville. As a Habersham County native and former YHC student, I knew the area very well. When I was given the opportunity to move to the mountains for a job, my wife and I didn't hesitate. We agreed that it was the most beautiful place on earth and exactly where we wanted to live, work and raise our children. We have never regretted that move. YHC has provided a quality education for so many young lives and played an important role educationally, economically and culturally in the area.

A SPECIAL DELIVERY

Many alumni and friends of Young Harris College were reminded that their support makes a difference every single day when they received a calendar in the mail this fall along with a note from YHC Alumni Association President Rob Murray, '75.

"Giving back is one way I demonstrate my gratitude for the opportunities my time as a student provided me," he said. "Young Harris gave me one of the most incredible experiences of my life, and it helped shape who I am today. I learned and grew so much during my time there, so naturally I want to return the favor."

Every year, thousands of gifts—\$5 or \$50,000—to the Young Harris Annual Fund from alumni, parents, friends, faculty, staff, students and foundations make a combined, immediate impact.

This collective source of support enhances the overall undergraduate experience by helping the College fund scholarships, support great faculty, make classroom equipment upgrades and underwrite new innovative programming.

Whether providing one library book or an entire stocked laboratory, a soccer ball or a summer study abroad trip, a music stand or a quality guest lecture, every gift is an investment in YHC students.

For more information about annual giving opportunities, contact Senior Director of Development Stacie Barrow at (706) 379-5375 or sbarrow@yhc.edu.



Jones Webb received a resolution from YHC President Cathy Cox.

JONES WEBB NAMED EMERITUS TRUSTEE

Young Harris College's Board of Trustees expressed its appreciation to Jones Webb for his years of service by unanimously passing a resolution to elect him an emeritus trustee of the College during the group's spring meeting held on campus in April 2013.

Webb has a long and close history with YHC dating back to the beginning of the 1900s when his grandfather, C. A. Webb, and his family owned a store and rooming house for male students in the area.

His father, Ruel Webb, '16, attended the College, then also known as The Academy, and served as the editor of the College's first yearbook. His future father-in-law, Marvin Allison, '17, was also an alumnus.

Webb was elected to YHC's Board of Trustees in 1978 and has been a loyal and dedicated member for 35 years. He has served on the academic affairs, executive, planned giving and properties committees, and also served as secretary of the board for 17 years.

"Jones has given unselfishly of his time, talents and resources to YHC," said YHC President Cathy Cox. "He has provided keen insight, legal acumen, wise counsel and generous friendship to the Board of Trustees."



ALUMNI WEEKEND 2013:

THE GREATEST PURPLE PARTY ON THE PLANET

PHOTOGRAPHY BY SCOTT DEAN AND PHILIP SAMPSON, '84



OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP ROW Students like Hana Kudela, of Moultrie, mingled with alumni at the Dorcas/Spat breakfast in Grace Rollins Dining Hall. ■ Members of the classes of 2002 and 2003 reunited during the weekend. **SECOND ROW** During lunch, alumni enjoyed "ruckus music" by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans, a band comprised of Assistant Professor of English and Study Abroad Director Eloise Whisenhunt, Ph.D., Dean of the Division of Fine Arts and Art Department Chair Ted Whisenhunt, Assistant Professor of Philosophy Jamie Watson, Ph.D., and his wife, Darlena Watson. ■ Scott Thompson, '93, and his wife, Rhonda, were all smiles. **BOTTOM ROW** Alumni from across the generations gathered on the plaza. **ABOVE** The plaza was packed during GreenFest. **RIGHT** Baseball players Adam Moore (left), of Kennesaw, and Spencer Thomas (right), of Key Biscayne, Fla., posed with former Mountain Lion Tim Burgess, '02, who threw out the first pitch of the weekend. **BELOW** A barbecue lunch was served up in the Recreation and Fitness Center. ■ Student organizations like the Upsilon Delta Sigma Society set up tables and greeted alumni on the plaza.



PURPLE PRIDE WAS ON DISPLAY THIS SPRING AS HUNDREDS OF YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE ALUMNI, THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS MADE THEIR WAY TO THE ENCHANTED VALLEY FOR ALUMNI WEEKEND 2013, APRIL 19-21.

ALUMNI FROM ACROSS ALL GENERATIONS gathered to reminisce and honor a group of outstanding alumni and friends on Friday evening at the Half Century Club Dinner and Alumni Awards Ceremony. Members of the Class of 1963 were recognized as special guests of the evening in commemoration of their 50th reunion.


On Saturday, alumni mingled with family, friends and faculty during lunch in the Recreation and Fitness Center and enjoyed live music by Cornbread Ted and the Butterbeans. The plaza was the place to be in the afternoon during the Alumni GreenFest that included children's activities and table displays from YHC students promoting various clubs and Greek organizations.

Theatre lovers checked out a performance of Theatre Young Harris' season finale, Steven Dietz's original comedy "Becky's New Car," while stargazers flocked to O. Wayne Rollins Planetarium to check out the family show "The Little Star That Could" and a cosmic concert featuring the music of Led Zeppelin.

The YHC baseball team hosted Peach Belt Conference competitors Georgia College throughout the weekend, edging out a 6-5 win in Saturday's game. Former athletes also enjoyed some friendly competition at the alumni soccer games coordinated by the Department of Athletics.

The weekend also included new events beyond the tried-and-true annual favorites. On Saturday afternoon, YHC Dean of the Chapel and Minister to the College Rev. Dr. Tim Moore led a special service in Susan B. Harris Chapel featuring performances by YHC students. Later that evening, the All-Class Party in the Recreation and Fitness Center included live music and a buffet-style dinner.

The weekend's festivities wrapped up Sunday morning with a worship service at Sharp Memorial United Methodist Church led by YHC trustee Rev. David Haygood, '60.

 View more photos of Alumni Weekend 2013 @ [flickr.com/youngharriscollege](https://www.flickr.com/photos/youngharriscollege/).

 Watch highlights from the event.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT Past and current generations of "Susan Bs" gathered at the chime of the Susan B. Harris Chapel bell. ■ The Generation X gospel choir performed during a chapel service on Saturday afternoon. ■ Alumni mingled at the All-Class Party in the Recreation and Fitness Center on Saturday evening. ■ Butch Barnes, '78, showed Phi Chi pride. ■ The Class of 1963 enjoyed a special reception to celebrate their 50th reunion.



ALUMNI AWARDS



Tara Thomas Currier, '04, Cartersville, Ga.
YOUNG ALUMNI ACHIEVEMENT AWARD
Given to an alumnus or alumna who has graduated within the last 15 years and has excelled in his or her career



Brigadier General Royce Smith, '46, Jacksonville, Fla.
EXCEPTIONAL MILITARY SERVICE AWARD
Given to an alumnus or alumna who has served with honor and distinction in the United States military



Bishop Charles Wilbourne "Handy" Hancock, '44, Macon, Ga.
ARTEMAS LESTER AWARD
Given to an alumnus or alumna in recognition of a lifetime dedicated to ministry and a commitment to Christian service



Dr. Elizabeth "Liz" Fincher Nevil, '57, Athens, Ga.
IUVENTUS AWARD
Given to an alumnus or alumna who has made significant contributions to the education of our youth



Richard and Shirley McGinnis, Johns Creek, Ga.
NANCY LOUISE HAYNES STEPHENS SANDERSON ROBERTSON OUTSTANDING FRIEND AWARD
Given to a friend of YHC who has dedicated his or her time, resources and energy to ensure a successful future for the College



The Garrard Family
YHC FAMILY OF THE YEAR AWARD
Given to a family associated with YHC in recognition of their special connection to the College



Carole Morgan, '58, Comer, Ga.
SUSAN B. HARRIS AWARD
Given to an outstanding alumna who has provided strong support for YHC



Robert "Bob" Head, '59, Blairsville, Ga.
DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI AWARD FOR LIFETIME CAREER ACHIEVEMENT
Given to an alumnus or alumna who has demonstrated great success in his or her career following a successful foundation laid by the College

Your YHC Roots

YOUNG HARRIS
COLLEGE ALUMNI
WEEKEND 2013


SAVE THE DATE

**FRIDAY-SUNDAY,
APRIL 25-27**

- Make plans to attend the **Half Century Club Dinner and Alumni Awards Ceremony** on Friday evening, where special VIP tables will be available for Class of 1964 members.
- Nominate alumni and friends for the **2014 annual alumni awards** online @ yhc.edu/alumniawards or contact the Office of Alumni Services at (706) 379-5334 or alumni@yhc.edu. Deadline for nominations is Friday, Jan. 3.
- Celebrate a reunion or just mingle with classmates on Saturday from 4-6 p.m. at the **All-Class Social**. Complementary hors d'oeuvres will be provided, and beverages will be available for purchase.
- Enjoy **campus events** like a Mountain Lions baseball game, the Theatre Young Harris season finale "RENT" and the annual Senior Thesis Art Exhibition.
- Start planning your **milestone class reunion** by contacting the Office of Alumni Services.

A detailed schedule and registration form will follow in early spring.

 Find out more about Alumni Weekend @ yhc.edu/alumniweekend.

 Start the conversation using the hashtag #YHCAW14.

 Watch the Alumni Awards Ceremony @ yhc.edu/alumniawards.



CLASS NOTES

Share your news with other Young Harris College alumni and friends.

Send achievements, announcements and photos to: Young Harris College Class Notes
P.O. Box 275 Young Harris, GA 30582 | alumni@yhc.edu | yhc.edu/alumni

ACHIEVEMENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

1960s



Jack Maguire, '67, was appointed a county government representative to the National Geospatial Advisory Committee, a federal government advisory group comprised of 30 mapping specialists from all levels of government as well as companies like ESRI, Google and Microsoft. Maguire will provide recommendations on federal geospatial policy and management issues and advise on National Spatial Data Infrastructure development.

1970s

Lynn Kitchens, '74, recently released his second record, "Album of the Year," which can be found on the independent music store website CD Baby (cdbaby.com) along with his 2002 debut "Rockin' with the Goose."



David Lee, '78, was inducted into the Western North Carolina

Agricultural Hall of Fame. The annual induction ceremony held in May 2013 at the Mountain Horticultural Crops Research & Extension Center in Mills River, N.C., "recognizes stewards of the agribusiness sector and honors the visionaries and leaders of the agriculture industry." With more than 25 years of service to the region as a commercial loan officer with Carolina Farm Credit, Lee was honored for strengthening the financial base of the agricultural community and expanding the profitability of small and large farming operations in the region.

Juli Sibley, '79, was invited to join the Georgia Regents University faculty as an adjunct professor of art. She will teach art history and studio classes.

1980s



Julie Johnston Tepp, '87, has been named to the *Atlanta Business Chronicle's* 2013 "Who's Who in Hospitality" list of the top 100 people who are "answering the call to leadership in Atlanta's hospitality industry," marking her third consecutive appearance in the annual guide. She is founder and president of the Atlanta Arts Festival held each September in Atlanta's Piedmont Park.

Ruth Bone Westbrooks, '84, was appointed principal of Puckett's Mill Elementary School in Duluth.

1990s

Karin Wilson Best, '92, was named 2013 "Girls Tennis Coach of the Year" by the *Savannah Morning News*. Best coaches the men's and women's teams at Savannah Arts Academy. The women's team went undefeated in Region 1-AAA play and advanced to the Class AAA Final Four, finishing the season with a 13-1 record. The men's team also reached the Final Four and finished with a 12-2 record.

Mark Hodges, '91, who serves as creative services director for WRDW-TV News 12 in Augusta, recently received the GABBY award for "Best Commercial" from the Georgia Association of Broadcasters. His station received numerous top honors, including the prestigious "Station of the Year" award.

2000s

Rebecca Westbrooks, '08, graduated from the University of Georgia with a bachelor of science degree in health and physical education in May 2013. In June, she traveled to Namibia, Africa, for a six-month internship with a mission society of The United Methodist Church. Westbrooks chronicled her journey on her blog, "Children of Zion Village" (rebeccaincozvb.blogspot.com).

Dr. Sylvia McCoy Hutchinson, '58,

was named director of academic partnerships and initiatives at the University of Georgia (UGA). She joined the Division of Student Affairs staff to coordinate a new strategic priority to formalize and strengthen partnerships with campus academic units. Dr. Hutchinson is also responsible for building a network of student affairs partnerships with academic degree programs and instructional enterprises, as well as fostering learning opportunities for students. She currently serves as professor emerita of higher education and reading education at UGA. She received her bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees from UGA and joined the faculty in 1978.



2010s

Kelsey Cunningham, '13, currently serves as a marketing specialist at the Georgia World Congress Center in Atlanta.

Grier Fricks, '10, was named operations coordinator for education and stewardship programs at Kualoa Ranch Hawaii, Inc., in Ka'a'awa, Hawaii.

James "Jack" Tripp, '12, was recently commissioned a Global Mission Fellow with The United Methodist Church to complete Hurricane Sandy relief and recovery work through Restoration Generation. He currently works for the faith-based organization as restoration coordinator.

three children and seven grandchildren. He looks forward to celebrating his 50th class reunion during Alumni Weekend 2014.

2000s

Dr. Brandon Butler, '00, and his wife, Kristen, are excited to announce the birth of their first child, Jackson Marshall, on Aug. 28, 2013. He weighed 6 pounds, 8 ounces, and was 20 inches long. The family currently resides in Norfolk, Va.



ENGAGEMENTS, MARRIAGES & BIRTHS

1960s

Phil Hope, '64, and Joyce Barnes Hope were married on May 13, 2013. Phil is retired from the U.S. Air Force, Friedman's Jewelers and the Savannah Cemetery Association. He enjoys working for John B. Rourke Gentlemen's Clothiers in Savannah a few days each week and spending time with his

James Kern, '09, and **Heather Herndon, '09**, were married on May 4, 2013, in Gainesville, Ga. After graduating from YHC, the couple attended Flagler College in St. Augustine, Fla., where they both earned sociology degrees in 2011. They recently moved to Orlando, Fla., and will

pursue graduate degrees from the University of Central Florida in 2014.

Teresa Kinzalow, '06, and Jacan Dossett were married on July 14, 2012. They currently reside in Gulf Breeze, Fla.

Jared Norton, '08, and his wife, Linsey, are excited to announce the birth of their first child, Karlee Lynne Norton, on Dec. 27, 2012.

Brian Dale Smith, '09, and **Carrie Ann Dixon, '09**, were married on March 10, 2012, in Gainesville. The pair is originally from Elberton and now lives in Athens, Ga., where they both graduated from the University of Georgia.

Daniel Warzon, '09, married Rachel Westbrook on Nov. 17, 2012. He is a teacher and coach at Collins Hill High School in Suwanee.

2010s



Kayla Jones, '13, and **Samuel Walker, '13**, were married on Sept. 14, 2013, at Starrsville Plantation in Covington. Kayla is an admissions counselor at YHC, and Sam serves as a youth technical director at Rockdale Youth Soccer Academy in Conyers.



Travis Jay McAllister, '13, proposed to **Anna Aycock, '09**, in front of Susan B. Harris Chapel after YHC's 2013 Commencement ceremony. The couple met during their freshman year at the College. Travis received his bachelor's degree in business and public policy in May, and Anna works for a dermatologist in the Athens, Ga., area.



Victoria Neisler, '12, and Chase Carter were married on June 22, 2013, in Victoria's hometown of Commerce. Chase is YHC's competitive cheerleading head coach, while Victoria is an admissions counselor and competitive cheerleading assistant coach at the College.

A Tribute to The Honorable T. Bert Lance | 1931-2013



"If it ain't broke, don't fix it." Thomas Bertram "Bert" Lance, Sr., coined the north Georgia phrase he learned as a young boy and often used as a practical working philosophy. The distinguished Young Harris College trustee died on Aug. 15, 2013, at the age of 82.

Lance grew up on the YHC campus in the building formerly known as the Hased House. His father, T. Jack

Lance, served as the College's president from 1930 to 1942, and nearly a dozen of his relatives have graduated from Young Harris dating back to 1915.

He attended Young Harris Primary School with fellow trustee and former Georgia Governor and U.S. Senator Zell Miller, '51. The two remained the best of friends through the years, sharing passions for politics and YHC.

Lance attended Emory University and the University of Georgia. He married the love of his life, LaBelle, in 1950, and began his banking career as a teller at Calhoun National Bank the following year. Little more than a decade later, Lance was the bank's president. He served as chairman of the board from 1974 through 1986.

The self-described "country banker" made the jump to politics in 1970, advising everyone from Miller to Jesse Jackson. He became director of the Georgia Department of Transportation serving under then-Governor Jimmy Carter, and was a democratic candidate for governor of Georgia in 1974.

He encouraged Carter to seek the White House, and was later asked to become his national director of the Office of Management and Budget. Lance's meteoric career in business and politics climaxed in the early months of the Carter presidency, when he was known as the "deputy president" because of his close relationship with his fellow Georgian.

Lance joined the YHC Board of Trustees in 1999. In 2007, Lance entrusted the College with the "Bert and LaBelle Lance Collection" that consists of documents containing the signatures of former U.S. Presidents from George Washington to George W. Bush, along with items related to his own political service. The invaluable collection is housed in YHC's Duckworth Library.

Faith and family were always paramount for Lance. He taught the "Jack Lance Sunday School Class" at Calhoun First United Methodist Church for more than 50 years, and enjoyed spending time with his three sons, 14 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

A long-time participant in civic, educational and church affairs, Lance was always willing to serve—whether it was his community, state or nation.

YHC EMERITUS PROFESSOR AND FORMER COACH Inducted into Georgia Tennis Hall of Fame



Dr. Nichols (right) and his wife, Gayle, attended the induction ceremony.

Young Harris College Emeritus Professor of Mathematics Bob Nichols, Ed.D., was recently inducted into the Georgia Tennis Hall of Fame during the Atlanta Senior Invitational Tournament in May 2013.

He joins a distinguished group of individuals whose personal achievements and contributions to the game have made a significant impact on tennis in the state.

Dr. Nichols was an All-American athlete at Georgia Tech and was ranked as high as No. 2 in the Southern Tennis Association in 1960. He won the Georgia Open that same year, as well as the Atlanta City Open in 1961.

Dr. Nichols taught math, coached tennis and served as director of academic advising at YHC before retiring in 2009 after 42 years in the classroom. Two of his YHC teams won Georgia Junior College championships.

He and his wife, Gayle, also ran the popular Georgia Mountains Tennis Camp at the College from 1972 through 1985.

In 2012, the couple was recognized for their outstanding contributions to the College when the Bob and Gayle Nichols Tennis Complex was dedicated in their honor. More than 300 former players, campers, friends and students attended the ceremony.

The pair currently resides in Young Harris, where Nichols still plays tennis on campus a few times a week with a group of “old geezers.”

Nichols summed up his tennis career: “It has truly been the game of my lifetime.”



ALUMNI ENJOY Mountain Lions Mingles

The Young Harris College Alumni Association is bringing the action to spirited alumni throughout the state with special gatherings at athletic events facing Peach Belt Conference rivals throughout the Southeast.

On Nov. 1, the men's basketball team played their season opener against the Georgia Tech Yellow Jackets at the McCamish Pavilion in Atlanta. Nearly 100 alumni—many of whom traveled from Young Harris on a chartered bus—enjoyed a special reception and cheered on the purple and white.

Two more Mountain Lions Mingles will be held at Georgia College in Milledgeville on Saturday, Jan. 11, and at Georgia Regents University in Augusta on Saturday, Feb. 8.



Find out more and register now @
yhc.edu/alumni.

IN MEMORIAM

Veronica N. Adams, '89
Aug. 29, 2013

Hugh Atkins, '48
July 7, 2013

Lois M. Barr
Friend of YHC
July 2, 2013

Mattie Lee M. Baxley, '38
Aug. 22, 2013

Midge Baxley, '51
April 21, 2013

June Broadrick
Friend of YHC
June 6, 2013

Dr. Ernest Q. Campbell, '43
July 28, 2013

W. Mac Capton, '47
March 25, 2013

Edna Collins, '32
Aug. 13, 2013

Russell E. Cross, '43
Sept. 12, 2013

Rebecca Demby
Friend of YHC
June 6, 2013

Marshall A. Dooly, III, '73
April 8, 2013

Kay Hurt Dugger, '64
April 14, 2013

Dorothy Franklin, '37
March 30, 2013

Florrie Guy Funk
Friend of YHC
April 12, 2013

William A. Gay, '58
Sept. 3, 2013

Thomas Candler Gilliland
Friend of YHC
March 31, 2013

Dustin Forrest Goode, '97
Aug. 1, 2013

John W. Hamrick, '69
April 26, 2013

Janet Marie Holcomb, '84
July 23, 2013

David Howell, '75
March 30, 2013

Anita Cheryl Hunziker, '66
June 10, 2013

Harold J. Jennings, '56
Sept. 22, 2013

John W. Johnson, '63
Sept. 4, 2013

Robert B. Kempson, '51
March 29, 2013

Carolyn Kendrick, '46
Oct. 3, 2013

Jack C. Lance, Sr., '57
March 24, 2013

T. Bert Lance
Trustee
Aug. 15, 2013

Aimar V. Martin, '59
May 10, 2013

Ruth Dobbs McDonald
Friend of YHC
April 17, 2013

Robert K. McLendon, '62
May 19, 2013

Ann Mewborne, '52
July 4, 2013

Adora W. Mills, '56
Aug. 20, 2013

Sue Motz, '43
May 15, 2013

Dr. Douglas F. Parker, '63
April 21, 2013

Revonda Lee Phillips, '68
Aug. 28, 2013

Ralph Potts, '52
June 18, 2013

Nolan Charles Robinson, '60
June 10, 2013

Bill Sands, '54
Oct. 1, 2013

Dr. Bettie M. Sellers
Professor emeritus
May 17, 2013

Gladys Shirley, '34
Aug. 23, 2013

Shirley J. Smith, '58
Oct. 20, 2013

David L. Troughton, '49
April 25, 2013

Joseph C. Wilson, '41
July 22, 2013

THE LAST WORD

Overheard@YHC: North Georgia Gems

The area surrounding Young Harris College is full of secret trails, majestic waterfalls and plenty of shops and eateries that put chain establishments to shame. We took to Facebook to ask alumni to share their favorite "hidden gems" surrounding the campus.

I like hiking up to Double Knob by way of Sunset Rock. **Paul Spencer, '79**

Exploring Rudy Cave below Double Knobs. **Paul Durfield, '91**

Standing on both sides of the Chattahoochee River at the same time! Only a half-hour drive and 2.5-mile hike from campus. **Joshua Dyer, '11**

I loved when my mom would mail me \$5. I would go to the Georgia Mountain Restaurant for a chicken strip sandwich on a hamburger bun with Mary Ellen Baker, '96. **Julie Keyes, '97**

Moody Hollow. Ezra Sellers used to take our art classes there. **Neel Ingalls, '72**

The Sunshine Store on the way to Vogel. I loved their cider and funky knick-knacks. That place always brought a smile. **Daniel Garrett, '93**

The Old Wagon Trail that drops you off right at the dorms. One of my fondest hikes was in early spring with snow still on the mountaintop. **Teisha Cooper-Drake, '98**

Alexander's. They have "everything under the sun." **Becky Johnson, '63**

Cow's Rock, Sunset Rock and Misty Mountain. The wall on Airline is awesome. **Sam McDuffie, '98**

Cupids is... was... forever will be a favorite place. In fact, I just took some photos there that I'm hanging in my living room. **Misty Royston McGlathery, '89**

Join the conversation @
[facebook.com/youngharriscollege](https://www.facebook.com/youngharriscollege).

Mountain Myths

The rumors surrounding the Track Rock Gap area in Union County sound like something featured on The History Channel. Could the petroglyphs found just miles from the Young Harris College campus really be home to ancient Mayan ruins?

On the surface, the evidence is there. The ruins, first discovered in 1715, consisted of fort-like circular structures. Frontiersmen generally attributed these edifices to the Cherokee Indians, who lived in the region in the late 1700s and early 1800s. The Cherokee, however, denied being the builders at that time.

The name of Brasstown Bald itself also hints at a Mayan presence. When missionaries arrived in the area in the 1820s, they discovered a Cherokee village near the mountain called "Itsa-ye." The missionaries mistranslated this to mean "brass" and added "town." When translated into English, Itsa-ye actually means "Place of the Maya."

In 2000, a local retired engineer persuaded the U.S. Forest Service to hire a professional archaeologist to study the Track Rock Gap petroglyphs. While the study found no conclusive evidence that the soapstone boulders were related to the ancient Mayans, many weren't convinced.

Today, the area known as the Track Rock Gap Archaeological Zone and Petroglyphs is protected by the U.S. Forest Service, which works closely with Muscogee Creek Nation and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians tribal governments. Their goal is to manage, protect and better understand these important, sacred ceremonial sites now attributed to the Native Americans that once occupied the area.

Nature's Course

Young Harris College opens students' eyes and minds with creative courses that capitalize on the uniqueness of the region. From beekeeping to backcountry living skills, YHC's 17 majors and 17 minors are enriched by awesome offerings that would make any alumni want to return to the classroom.

APPALACHIAN LITERATURE

This course examines regional writing in an effort to understand and critique the stereotypes attached to Appalachia and its people.

BACKCOUNTRY LIVING SKILLS

Students learn the fundamentals of traveling and camping in the wilderness while exploring minimum impact methods, land use ethics and environmental stewardship.

BUSINESS AND PUBLIC POLICY IN APPALACHIA

Topics include the impact of industry, Tennessee Valley Authority and New Deal policies, postwar migration from the region, and mountaintop removal.

GREEN CHEMISTRY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The role chemistry plays in solving environmental problems and moving the world toward a more sustainable future are this course's key themes.

INTRODUCTION TO BEEKEEPING

From honey production to pollination, this interactive class includes a visit to a local apiary and participation in the YHC Beekeeping Institute.

NATIVE FLORA OF NORTH GEORGIA

Budding botanists are introduced to plant identification and taxonomy as it relates to the vegetation of the southern Appalachian biogeographic region.

ORGANIC GARDENING

In an effort to highlight the complexities of the organic agriculture industry, students get to grow their own fruits and vegetables while learning about the human agricultural movement.

WILDERNESS AS A METAPHOR

This survey of a variety of literature, film and art examines the physical, spiritual and experiential dimensions of understanding wilderness as it pertains to self, others and the environment.

WILDERNESS LITERATURE

This course aims to "rethink wilderness" through a critical examination of texts that represent various conceptions of unpopulated American landscapes.



Explore more courses @ catalog.yhc.edu.



PHOTO COURTESY OF UNION COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Office of Alumni Services
P.O. Box 275
Young Harris, GA 30582

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IT'S **MIDNIGHT** ON THE NIGHT BEFORE **FINALS WEEK**. YOU'VE BEEN CRAMMING,
BUT YOU NEED A **GUARANTEE** THAT YOU'LL ACE—OR AT LEAST
PASS—THE TEST. BETTER **WALK THE WALL**. ALL THE WAY DOWN
AND ALL THE WAY BACK. NO TRIPPING, NO TUMBLING. THERE.
NOW, WITH **ONE LAST STEP**,
YOUR GRADE IS SURE TO **JUMP** TO AN "A."

Share memories
like this and make
new ones with fellow
alumni at events like
**Alumni Weekend,
April 25-27, 2014**,
and keep up with the
latest news by subscribing
to the **Today@YHC** alumni
newsletter. Get connected
today at **yhcn.edu/alumni**.

THE MAGAZINE OF YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE

ECHOES

FALL/WINTER 2013

THE MAGAZINE OF YOUNG HARRIS COLLEGE | FALL/WINTER 2013

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