



2022-2023 Schedule

Cullowhee, Main Campus (Wednesdays, 10am – 12pm)

Asheville, Biltmore Park Site (Thursdays, 10am – 12pm)

September 14 & 15, 2022

State Employees Credit Union – Financial exploitation of older adults

Cullowhee Presenters: Jim Schwalm, Senior Vice President branch operations, Sylva
Abigail Clayton, Vice President branch operations, Cullowhee

Biltmore Park Presenters: Zach Curtis, Financial Advisory Services Manager, Asheville
Paul Cathey, Financial Advisory Services Manager, Asheville

Presentation Outline:

We will discuss the current trends in financial fraud and detail the most common scams that are currently impacting consumers, particularly those that are targeted to older adults. We will also discuss the red flags of elder financial exploitation, and the steps one should take if they identify an impacted individual. We plan to share some stories of real-life scam and exploitation situations that we have encountered in western North Carolina.

September 21 & 22, 2022

Tom Baker – Helping Veterans

Biography:

Tom Baker is an Army brat and an Army combat veteran from the Vietnam War. He was a grunt with the 101st Airborne Division in Nam, a parachute rigger, and he spent most of 1968 and early 69 as a doorgunner for the 1st of the 9th 1st Cav. For more than four decades, he has been a forester and logger in Western North Carolina. Adventure racing and triathlons also challenge and feed his spirit. Tom co-founded the Jackson County Veterans Organization. He is a member of Vietnam Veterans Post 0994, American Legion Post 104, and Veterans of Foreign Wars member-at-large. He provides insight on shelter needs for veterans by serving on the Board for Jackson County's Housing Equity Resources and Education (HERE). Tom began writing about fifteen years ago because he knew he had a story he needed to tell, even though he was not sure he could write it. He has published *The Hawk and The Dove*, a historical fiction, and a memoir entitled *Warrior Wannabe*. He mentors other vets in writing for healing, sometimes collaborating with Brothers and Sisters Like These and the Charles George VA Medical Center's Creative Writing Program in Asheville.

September 28 & 29, 2022

Wesley Myers – Domestic violence and advocacy

Biography:

Wesley Myers is the Executive Director of Center for Domestic Peace, the domestic violence services provider for Jackson County. He has a master's degree in criminology from Florida State University where he focused his studies and publications on the victimization of vulnerable populations and capital punishment.

Presentation Outline:

He will be speaking on the issues of domestic violence, its uniqueness as a form of victimization, and the importance of individual advocacy for domestic violence victims.

October 5 & 6, 2022

Brent Martin – George Masa's Wild Vision: A Japanese Immigrant Imagines Western North Carolina

Biography:

Brent Martin is the author of three chapbook collections of poetry and of *The Changing Blue Ridge Mountains: Essays on Journeys Past and Present*. His poetry and essays have been published in the *North Carolina Literary Review*, *Pisgah Review*, *Tar River Poetry*, *Chattahoochee Review*, *Eno Journal*, *New Southerner*, *Kudzu Literary Journal*, *Smoky Mountain News* and elsewhere. He lives in the Cowee community in Western North Carolina, where he and his wife, Angela Faye Martin, run Alarka Institute.

Presentation Outline:

Self-taught photographer George Masa (born Masahara Iizuka in Osaka, Japan), arrived in Asheville, North Carolina at the turn of the twentieth century amid a period of great transition in the southern Appalachians. Masa's photographs from the 1920s and early 1930s are stunning windows into an era where railroads hauled out the remaining old-growth timber with impunity, new roads were blasted into hillsides, and an activist community emerged to fight for a new national park. Masa began photographing the nearby mountains and helping to map the Appalachian Trail, capturing this transition like no other photographer of his time. His images, along with his knowledge of the landscape, became a critical piece of the argument for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, compelling John D. Rockefeller to donate \$5 million for initial land purchases. Despite being hailed as the "Ansel Adams of the Smokies," Masa died destitute and unknown in 1933. In *George Masa's Wild Vision: A Japanese Immigrant Imagines Western North Carolina*, poet and environmental organizer Brent Martin explores the locations Masa visited, using first-person narratives to contrast, lament, and exalt the condition of the landscape the photographer so loved and worked to interpret and protect. The book includes seventy-five of Masa's photographs, accompanied by Martin's reflections on Masa's life and work.

October 12 & 13, 2022

Dr. Chris Cooper – Concerns about democracy

Biography:

Christopher A. Cooper is Robert Lee Madison Distinguished Professor and Department Head of Political Science and Public Affairs at Western Carolina University. He has received Western Carolina University's highest awards for research (University Scholar, 2011) and teaching (Board of Governors Teaching Award, 2013) and was named the 2013 North Carolina Professor of the Year by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Cooper's published academic research features over 50 refereed journal articles and book chapters on NC politics, state politics, southern politics, and political behavior. He is also co-author of *The Resilience of Southern Identity: Why the South Still Matters in the Minds of its People* (University of North Carolina Press) and co-editor of *The New Politics of North Carolina* (published by the University of North Carolina Press). Cooper is a frequent source for news stories about North Carolina, as well as national politics and he has been quoted hundreds of times in a variety of media including the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Boston Herald*, *Al Jazeera*, *Charlotte Observer*, *Asheville-Citizen Times*, *The Hill*, *National Journal*, *Raleigh News and Observer*, North Carolina Insider National Public Radio (All Things Considered and Morning Edition), *USA Today*, CNN, FOX News, WUNC, Blue Ridge Public Radio, WFAE (Charlotte) ABC News, and *ESPN.com*. He has been called "obsessive about North Carolina politics, but in a good way" by the New Yorker Radio Hour and "the Yoda of local political experts" by WLOS.

October 19 & 20, 2022

Dr. Jake Greear – Global Warming and Limits to Economic Growth

Biography:

Jake Greear is originally from Helen, Georgia and currently lives near Asheville. He holds a PhD in Political Science from Johns Hopkins University, with a specialization in the sub-field of political theory. His research concerns how science and philosophy intersect with environmental politics and policy. Dr. Greear is an associate instructor at WCU, where he regularly teaches "American Politics" and "Political Theory." He also occasionally teaches upper-level undergraduate courses on climate change, politics of race and ethnicity, and theories of capitalism.

October 26 & 27, 2022

Jeffrey Vickery - Can We Finally Talk About Religion and Politics, Please?

Biography:

Since 2002 Jeffrey D. Vickery has served as co-pastor of Cullowhee Baptist Church alongside Rev. Tonya Vickery to whom he has been married for the last 29 years. Why a pastor besides a sense of divine calling? Because he believes the church still matters in the world today. In order to prevent mental decay, Jeffrey also teaches as an Adjunct Professor in the Department of Philosophy and Religion at WCU since 2005. Whenever he's not preaching or teaching, he's a proud father to two fabulous and talented daughters, one of whom is a WCU alumnae and the other is a WCU student. Just for fun he loves to be on a trail going as far as possible, and then back again, before the sun goes down. In short, he loves living in Cullowhee, NC.

Presentation Outline:

The relationship between religion and politics is often simplified in the public media when its

influences are complex and intertwined. In this presentation, we will discuss a wide range of topics including the relationship between religious fundamentalism and political extremism, current interest and/or attacks on the separation of church and state, white supremacy and Christian nationalism in contemporary Christianity, and the political interests among Jewish and Muslim Americans.

November 2 & 3, 2022

Dr. Ben Steere – The archaeology of ancestral Cherokee communities in western North Carolina

Biography:

Dr. Ben Steere is an Associate Professor of Anthropology in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Western Carolina University. He has worked on collaborative archaeological research and preservation projects with the Tribal Historic Preservation Office of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians since 2011, and served as Director of the Cherokee Studies Program at WCU from 2017 to 2022.

Presentation Outline:

Drawing on research from archaeology, ethnography, history, and indigenous studies, Dr. Ben Steere will discuss the historical and cultural importance of ancestral Cherokee archaeology sites in Western North Carolina.

November 9 & 10, 2022

Dr. Will Peebles

Biography:

Dr. Peebles earned his doctorate in music at Michigan State University, where he studied with Edgar Kirk, Robert Williams, and Richard Beene. He has taught bassoon, music theory, gamelan, and many other courses in his 31 years at Western.

Presentation Outline:

Dr. Will Peebles will talk about the life of a music major, from audition to graduation and beyond. He'll also perform a couple of pieces on bassoon.

November 16 & 17, 2022

Brian Huskey (Cullowhee) & Emily Ball (BP) – Homelessness in the United States - and How We Can END It

Biography (Brian):

Brian Huskey was born and raised in Charlotte, North Carolina, but claims Western North Carolina as his home: his mother was from Asheville, and his father was born in Clyde. Brian currently serves as the Executive Director of the Great Smokies Health Foundation, which provides grant funding for health initiatives across Jackson, Graham, Swain, and Macon counties. In his 25 years of work in the non-profit and government sectors, Brian has worked across the entire spectrum of homeless and affordable housing programs.

Brian earned his Bachelor's degree from Aquinas College in Nashville and holds a Masters of Divinity from the Episcopal Divinity School in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Prior to his work on housing and homelessness, Brian was the founder and CEO of a boutique musical artists booking and management company, during which time he negotiated live performance contracts, publishing and recording deals, and ancillary product and song licensing for a roster of 12 artists-including a few whose names and songs you likely know!

Presentation Outline (Brian):

Brian Huskey, Executive Director of the Great Smokies Health Foundation, has spent the last 25 years working around the intersection of homelessness, affordable housing, and related health concerns. His presentation will touch on the history of homelessness and persistent myths about the issue, recent trends and research findings, and most importantly, how the United States can actually END homelessness.

Biography (Emily):

Emily Ball is the Homeless Strategy Division Manager for the City of Asheville. She has worked to end homelessness for 16 years, 13 of which have been in Asheville. Her team provides leadership to both the City and the community on the essential work of developing systems that end homelessness.

Presentation Outline (Emily):

Homelessness is both a national and local crisis and a solvable problem. The severity and volume of homelessness have increased significantly during the pandemic with negative effects on all community members, but interventions are working across the country and our community has real opportunities to sustainably end this crisis.

November 30 & December 1, 2022

NCDOT – Division 14 (Cullowhee), Division 13 (Biltmore Park)

Wes Jamison, Zach Shuler & Jeanette White, NCDOT Division 14

Tim Anderson, Nathan Moneyham, Hannah Cook & Steve Cannon, NCDOT Division 13

Cullowhee –

Wesley A. Jamison, PE: Wes is a Licensed Professional Engineer and currently holds the position as the Division Project Development Engineer for NCDOT in Division 14. Wes began working with the Department in 2003 and has previously held positions as a Project Manager, County Maintenance Engineer for Jackson and Swain Counties and Assistant District Engineer for NCDOT. Wes is local to Jackson County and graduated from Smoky Mountain High School in 1997. He graduated with a B.S. in Civil Engineering from North Carolina State University in 2001.

Zachary T. Shuler, PE: Zachary Shuler is a Licensed Professional Engineer and currently holds the position as the Bridge Program Manager for NCDOT in Division 14. In his current role, he is responsible for the sectional of bridges to be replaced throughout Division 14 and the management of those projects. Zach previously served as the Assistant District Engineer for NCDOT and has also held a role as a Project Manager in the Bridge Department. He graduated with a B.S. in Civil Engineering from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 2016.

Jeanette L. White, PE: Currently, Jeanette White serves as the Senior Project Engineer within Project Development for NCDOT's Division 14. Prior to joining NCDOT, she led as the Civil Engineering and Geomatics Technologies Program Coordinator and Instructor for 11 years at Southwestern Community College. During which time she was also selected to assist the American Council on Education, ACE, as a Civil Engineering Subject Matter Expert (SME) to evaluate military course curriculum for equivalent civilian college credit. Originally from New Mexico, she served 8 years in the Navy as a Hospital Corpsman, HM2/PO2. She was last stationed on board the USS John F. Kennedy (CV-67), an aircraft carrier. After the military, she earned her Bachelor's in Civil Engineering from the University of North Florida. She later earned her professional engineering (PE) license, and later she completed her master's degree in Construction Management from Western Carolina University.

Presentation Outline (Cullowhee):

NCDOT and our Project Development Unit followed by Zach speaking about our Bridge Management program. Jeanette will close us out with a presentation on the NC 107 project through Sylva.

Biltmore Park –

Tim Anderson, P.E., Division Engineer for NCDOT, Division 13 covering Buncombe, Burke, McDowell, Madison, Mitchell, Rutherford and Yancey Counties: Tim grew up in the foothills of North Carolina. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from UNC Charlotte and is a registered professional engineer. Tim has served NCDOT in various roles, in 3 divisions, for more than 22 years, including 17 years in Division 13. He has spent the majority of his career in maintenance and operations working with citizens, municipalities, division and central NCDOT staff to deliver timely solutions to maintenance and operations challenges ranging from helping individual citizens with highway concerns to leading regional and statewide initiatives.

Nathan Moneyham, PE, Division Construction Engineer for NCDOT, Division 13 covering Buncombe, Burke, McDowell, Madison, Mitchell, Rutherford and Yancey Counties: Nathan holds a Bachelor's of Science degree in Civil Engineering from North Carolina State University and is a registered professional engineer. He spent 2 years with VDOT, before spending the last 10 years with NCDOT in Division 13. Nathan has spent the entirety of his career in construction and contract administration in various roles working with contractors, engineering firms, citizens, and municipalities in the development and delivery of construction projects across the Division. These projects range from resurfacing and small bridge replacements to large scale widening projects including the current I-4700 I-26 widening and the future I-2513 connector.

Hannah Cook, P.E., Senior Planning Engineer for NCDOT, Division 13 covering Buncombe, Burke, McDowell, Madison, Mitchell, Rutherford, and Yancey Counties: Hannah Cook is currently serving as the Senior Planning Engineer for NCDOT Division 13. She has a Bachelor's degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering from Mississippi State University and has been with NCDOT for 7 years. Hannah began her career at NCDOT in construction, assisting in day-to-day contract administration of transportation projects before moving into the role of Senior Planning Engineer. She participates in the development of long-range, comprehensive transportation

plans for metropolitan planning organizations, counties, and small urban areas. She primarily serves as liaison between the local government, Division, and central NCDOT staff to obtain funding for capital projects in our region through NCDOT's Prioritization process.

Steve Cannon, P.E., Division Project Development Engineer for NCDOT, Division 13 covering Buncombe, Burke, McDowell, Madison, Mitchell, Rutherford, and Yancey Counties: As Division Project Development Engineer Steve is responsible for management of the Project Development Unit for Division 13's seven counties. He has a Bachelor of Science degree in Civil Engineering from UNC Charlotte and is a registered professional engineer with more than 24 years of civil engineering experience. Steve began his career with NCDOT in preconstruction surveying followed by several years in maintenance, and district operations / construction before moving into his current role with Project Development 4 years ago. Project Development is responsible for a variety of activities including planning, budgeting, environmental compliance, design, contract preparation, and construction support.

Presentation Outline (Biltmore Park):

NCDOT Division 13: Connecting people, products and places in Western North Carolina. The NCDOT Division 13 team will share information about the mission of NCDOT, how projects are developed and constructed, along with updates on some of the major projects in the area. The team will also share NCDOT's role in maintaining the transportation infrastructure, transportation safety, mobility, and growth. The team will discuss current and future challenges to managing the nation's second largest transportation system.

December 7, 2022 (*Cullowhee campus ONLY*)

Emiko Suzuki – Japanese Flower Arranging

Biography:

Emiko Suzuki is a Senior Professor 2nd Grade of Ikenobo School of Ikebana and has Bonten certificate of Omote-Senke both headquartered in Kyoto, Japan. She taught ikebana and the tea ceremony to students of all ages in Japan before she came to Western North Carolina in August 2007. She began studying the tea ceremony and Ikenobo ikebana in 1986 Japan. Emiko graduated from Western North Carolina University with a Masters of Art Teacher in May 2011 and with Master of Fine Art in December 2014. She always tries to bring the Japanese cultural spirit to local organizations through ikebana, tea ceremony and other aspects of Japanese culture. She continues to teach Ikenobo ikebana lessons and tea ceremony. Emiko is a president of Blue Ridge Chapter of Ikenobo Ikebana Society since 2018.

Presentation Outline:

Ikebana is an ancient art of Japanese flower arranging has been practicing since 1400s in Japan. Ikenobo is the origin of Ikebana, and its tradition has been handed down from generation to generation in Japan. In addition to that, many country people are fascinated by the tradition while using their local plants. I am excited to share with you how I am teaching the tradition with plants from the WNC area.