



# IMPACT REPORT HUNTER LIBRARY

*Community &  
Connections*

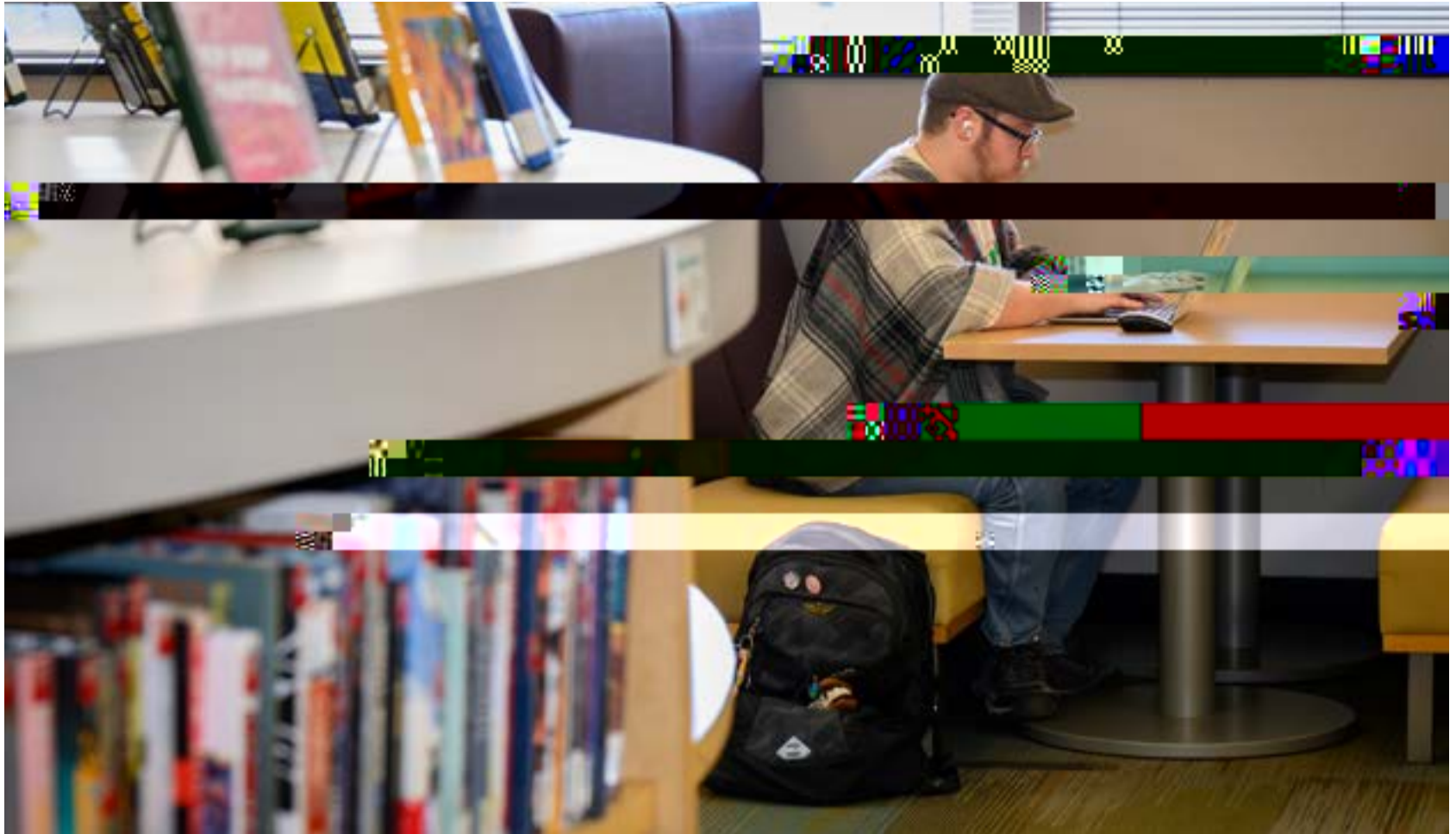


**2023-2024**

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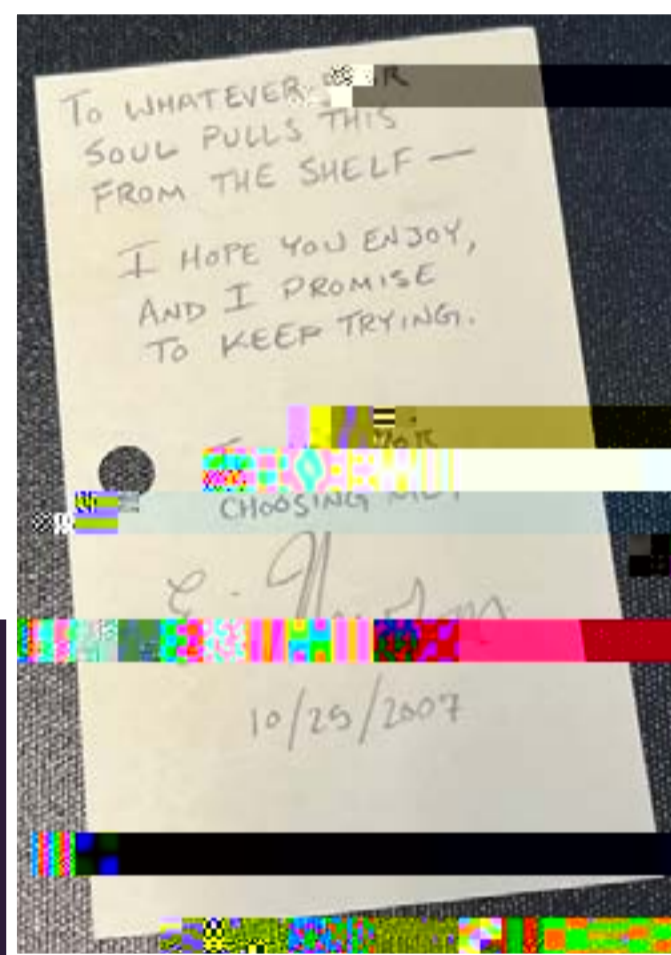




# Digitizing the WORK OF ALUMNI

By Heidi Buchanan

When Eric Newsom completed his thesis (M.A., English, 2007), he included a special addendum in the library's print copy: a \$20 bill. Enclosed, along with the cash, was a note dated



# New Tool Shines Light ON FIREFLY RESEARCH

By Chaz Lilly



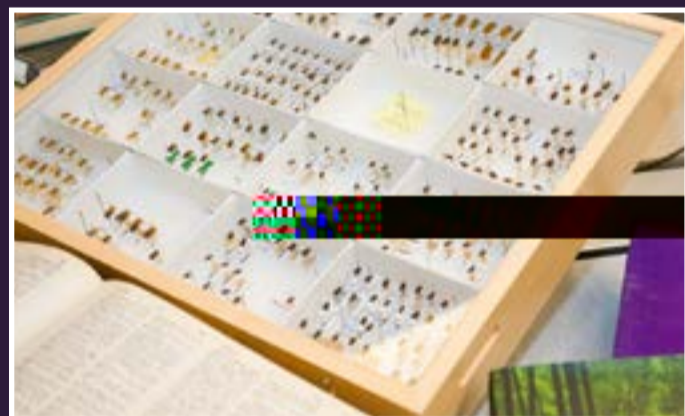
Western Carolina University assistant professor Luiz Lima da Silveira has spent decades learning about fireflies. And, there's a lot to know. There are more than 2,400 known species of the beetle on six continents. Lampyridae, their scientific name, are important for many reasons. In addition to their cultural value, they inspire advancements in technology and medicine, control environmental pests and parasites, and monitor climate changes.

Dr. da Silveira encountered a problem: Most scholarly works on firefly taxonomy – the naming and classifying of fireflies – is old and written in many different languages. There have been two catalogs detailing this literature, but the most recent one was last published in 1966. Another complicating factor is that much of this information is not digitized or freely available online.

Faced with this problem, da Silveira looked for help. He contacted Krista Schmidt, a professor and STEM librarian at Hunter Library, who also is an expert in scientific literature and information organization, to help design a digital tool that could corral all the assorted resources.

She reached out to her colleagues in library web services, Grey Jenkins and Adam Olsen, for their experience in database creation. "This was a fun, collaborative project that required a team to help organize subject matter, translate data and design a user-friendly interface that makes the digital resource intuitive and useful," Jenkins said.

The result? FirefLI: the first interactive database for finding taxonomy-based scholarship related to firefly species. This innovative database connects changes in firefly names, from the 1700s to today, making tracking literature related to a species easier than ever. The database is a collaborative effort between Western Carolina University and Hunter Library, and it is a testament to the power of interdisciplinary research and collaboration.









## More Events



### Game Nights and Chess Club

We continued our popular game night events in the the spring and fall semesters and co-hosted a Miniature Painting Night with Residential Living. The library helped organize the formation of the Catamount Chess Club in the spring semester. Chess coaches were available at library-sponsored chess events.



### Banned Books Week, October 2-6

Approximately 120 people participated in the library's celebration of the freedom to read. Education Librarian Jazmyne Baylor, moderated a panel of educators and librarians who answered questions about why and how books are challenged and why book bans are on the rise. Students in Dr. Kinser's English courses presented their research on literature that has been challenged or banned over the years.



### Hip Hop 50th Anniverary, November 13-17

The library collaborated with Global Black Studies to honor the 50th anniversary of hip hop music. The week of events included a yoga class, a game night, a lo-fi hip hop study session, and culminated with a conversation with Dr. Corey J. Miles, Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology and Africana Studies program—a WCU Alum (2012).



### Library Art Contest, Spring 2024

We asked WCU students to submit digital art pieces reflecting the themes of community and belonging. A panel of judges, including WCU employees and students, selected the winning pieces, showcased in library's main stairway The People's Choice award is displayed in the lobby by the Java City cafe. Pictured: Winner of the first prize, *Rooftop Conversations* by Alexis Bumgardner.

# Lifelong Love of Libraries Leads to Couple's Philanthropic Support of Hunter Library

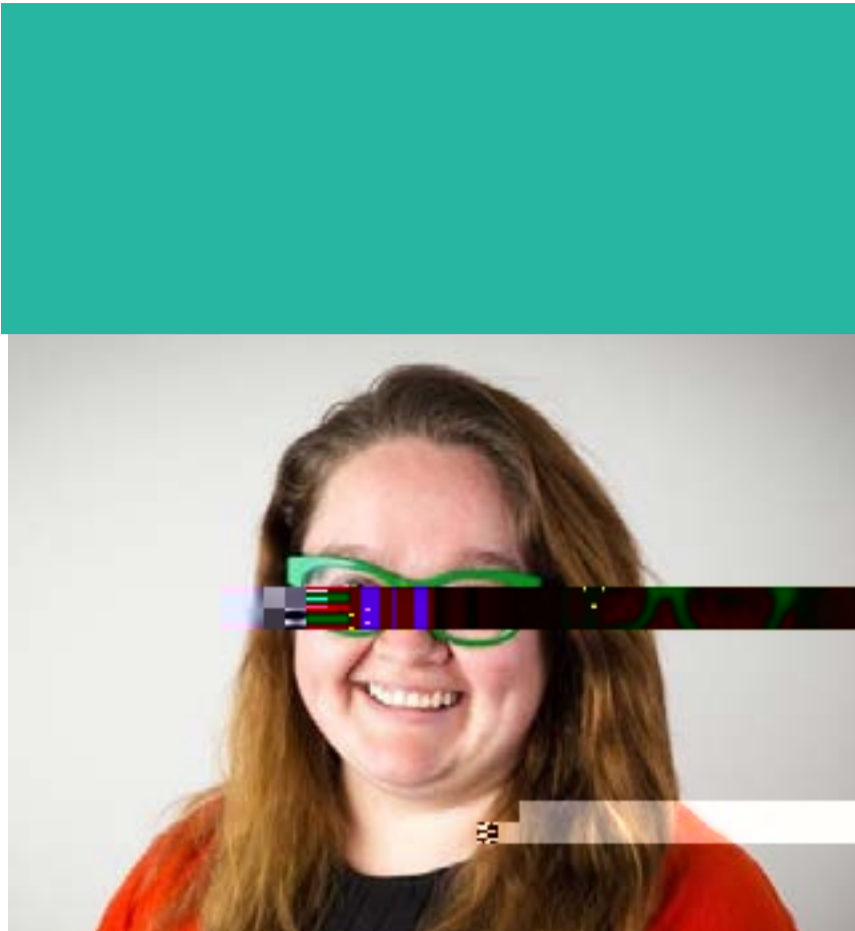
By Bill Studenc

A North Carolina couple's lifelong affinity for libraries has inspired them to direct gifts and pledges totaling \$25,000 to Western Carolina University to provide a boost for initiatives and services provided by Hunter Library. In addition to their initial contributions, Fleming and Margaret Bell, of Bryson City and Asheboro, also have made arrangements for the endowed fund to be supplemented by a future gift from their estate.

The A. Fleming Bell and Margaret J. Bell Library Fund will be used to improve Hunter Library's student support and engagement activities, programs and initiatives that enhance the visibility and utilization of library services, professional development programs for library faculty and staff, and travel and conference opportunities for students engaged with the library.

"We have chosen to make a philanthropic contribution to Hunter Library for several reasons. We see the library as a vital resource for all of the people of Western North Carolina, including members of the university community and other residents and visitors to our beautiful region," said Fleming Bell, a professor who retired in 2014 from the School of Government at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

"I also wanted to use part of the inheritance I received from my dear mother, Ann Bell, a longtime North Carolina public health nurse, to honor her. Mother grew up on a farm in eastern North Carolina during the Great Depression, and she was the first in her family to attend college. She was a devoted mother and a lifelong learner. I am proud to have her name on the library fund that will support the library's mission to provide access to information and learning for all." — Margaret Bell



Brandon A. Robinson, M.A., Esq., WCU Class of 2005 (B.A.) and 2010 (M.A.)

**Tisha Mentnech** is a 2014 graduate of WCU, and majored in History and Spanish Language and Literature. During her time at

2023-2024

# IN NUMBERS

Building Visitors  
**167,759**

Website Visits  
**164,944**

New Items  
Cataloged  
**3,270**

Questions Answered  
(Online and In-  
person)  
**15,050**

**317** Instruction  
Sessions for **6,491**  
Students

Physical Items  
Circulated  
**15,678**

