

# Heinrich's request: 'Just treat me like anyone else.'

By Donna Obrecht

Career goals, tough college level classes, living away from home, and making new friends are things many UNCA students are dealing with for the first time. At times these challenges, while exciting, can seem overwhelming.

Yet, to Heidi Heinrich these, and other daily problems, seem small. She takes them in her stride as she has done with larger problems all her life.

For Heinrich is a dwarf. The difficulties presented by this handicap over the years, have given Heinrich a sense of presence and self-assuredness found in few 18-year-olds.

Dwarfs' bodies are close to the size of average adults', however their limbs are much smaller. This often causes orthopedic problems.

Heinrich had 17 operations over the last three years to reconstruct her knees.

Walking around campus and going up and down all the steps is still a burden for Heinrich. Last week, after a fall on some steps she said she missed a few classes.

In spite of this, Heinrich manages to keep a positive attitude. During her operation, when her spirits got low, she said she would tell herself, "It going to be better tomorrow."

Where did all this positiveness and emotional



Staff photo by Sylvia Hawkins

**HEIDI HEINRICH has overcome problems caused by dwarfism and is pursuing a degree in meteorology at UNCA.**

strength come from?

Her family, Heinrich said.

"I'm lucky. I think I have the greatest parents in the world," she said.

Heinrich's younger brother, John, is also a dwarf. Heinrich said her parents "always put us first," yet "treated us like normal kids."

Several years ago the family moved from their Florida home to Boston so that Heidi and John could be operated on. Between operations the two received tutoring so that they would not lose time in school.

Back in Florida now,

Heinrich's parents are very supportive of her

going to college. They made sure she had a specially outfitted car, because even walking to a bank is an impossibility for her.

Heinrich feels that college is especially important for her. Clerical and restaurant jobs, which do not require a degree, might be difficult to get because of her height.

She chose UNCA because it was a small school which offered the degree she was seeking. Meteorology, or weather forecasting, is the field she would like to go into.

This is the first time Heinrich has lived away from home. She feels that people at UNCA treat her fairly, but then she doesn't need many special considerations.

Heinrich said she hasn't met a lot of people at

UNCA because "most of them are afraid to come up to me," and "I'm shy."

Sometimes people think Heinrich is a young child. "I have to show them I am 18 not five," she says.

This is often a problem in stores where sales people will only help what they perceive to be adults.

"Just treat me like anyone else," is Heinrich's request.

Heinrich is a member of the Little People of America and enjoys their year-long conferences.

"There you're not the odd-ball anymore; you're the majority," she said.

Still, these meetings are not the real world for Heinrich. She believes all people must prepare themselves to live in regular society.

## A new twist to an old fraternity

By Anna Wilson

A fraternity with a new twist is struggling to start a chapter at UNCA.

The international professional business fraternity, Delta Sigma Pi, is seeking members to help form this new organization.

The new twist is this fraternity is co-educational; it accepts women as members, not just as "little sisters."

Despite some setbacks and discouraging turnouts, Amie Goode, one of the founding members, is determined to get a chapter on campus.

"It's a really good time for a professional busi-

ness fraternity right now," said Goode. "The business department is backing us and so are several other campus officials."

This year, as the international chapter of the Delta Sigma Pi celebrates the 75th Anniversary of its founding, the fraternity is pushing for new chapters around the nation.

Recently, a chapter formed at Clemson University in South Carolina in less than 10 weeks. This time is very fast for a fraternity to get organized and going.

At first the UNCA "founding fathers" wanted to beat this record but....

"We were going at it too fast. Now we're going slower, step-by-step," said Goode.

"It takes a lot of time to get organized and right now we don't have extra time," she added.

Goode is working with a small core group of about 16 people to get a chapter started. But the fraternity must have at least 40 members in order to petition for recognition with the international chapter.

"They don't want to waste their time and money trying to get a group set up, then have it fold from

lack of participation," said Goode.

She believes the fraternity will be very beneficial in creating an environment for business on campus.

The organization has to have one business person a month come in and discuss work-day problems or experiences with the group.

"We want to strive for a balance of social activities and academic excellence, because it takes both to be a well-rounded person," said Goode.

Kim Laughter, a member of the core group, added that the fraternity is one way of making contacts with the outside world.

"By having business people come in and talk, we establish a relationship with them, and we are also contacting many members of the Delta Sigma Pi fraternity who are located in Asheville and would be willing to help us out with finances and support," she said.

"We want to encourage commuters also," said Goode. "The meetings are at night and at a later time. Commuters are a part of campus so they should be included."

The only disadvantage to joining the fraternity is the amount of time it

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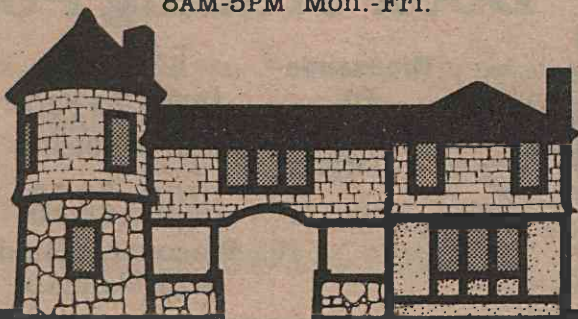
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Staff photo by Caroline Brown

**AMIE GOODE: One of the "founding fathers."**