



# The Decree

"Wesleyan's Student Voice Since 1960"

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## Commencement moves indoors

By MICHAEL GARCIA

The stage is set, the band is rented, and the hall is booked. It is time once again for May Commencement at North Carolina Wesleyan College.

Once more students will engage in the time-honored tradition of the graduation ceremony. At NCWC that tradition has been a ceremony on the front lawn of the Braswell Building, attended by members of the community, distinguished faculty, and as many relatives and friends of the graduates as can attend. However, this year things are going to be a little different.

This year when the graduating seniors of 2002 walk across the stage to receive their diplomas, they will not do so under the light of the sun, while looking upon an unnumbered multitude, but instead they will do so under stage lights in front of 1,200 people. This year's May Commencement will be held in the Minges Auditorium of the Dunn Center for the Performing Arts.

On Mar. 19, the new president of N.C. Wesleyan, Ian D.C. Newbould, announced his de-

cision to move graduation into the Dunn Center. According to President Newbould, "There is insufficient budget to put on a proper Spring Commencement outdoors." By "proper," Newbould is referring to appropriate staging, a better sound system, ample protection from the sun, an efficient system for marshaling, ropes, and crowd control. Newbould believes that holding commencement indoors will provide a more distinguished atmosphere and orderly conditions for the ceremony to take place.

With the commencement indoors there will be a few additional concerns for students. The most distressing of these concerns is the limit placed on the attendance of their relatives and friends. With graduation outdoors the students could have as many spectators as they wished. Now, the seniors will have to select only four people to attend their commencement.

For some lucky students a lottery held on April 17, for the 100 available seats in the Minges Auditorium, will allow them to have a couple more attendees. The

lottery winners will receive an additional two tickets, meaning out of the 300 graduating seniors, 50 of them will be able to have six people attend their graduation. Additional arrangements have been made so that any other attendees will be seated in Everett Gymnasium to watch the commencement on a special screen.

Regardless of these measures, many of the students at NCWC are not happy with this turn of events. May Graduation, traditionally, has been held outside and, in spite of the weather and other unreliable factors involved, many of the students would prefer things to remain the same.

"The entire senior class was devastated to learn that this tradition had been stripped away without so much as asking how we felt about it," said Tonya S. Bond (Chairperson, Graduation Committee).

Since the President's announcement, students have protested, the SGA (Student Government Association) has held emergency meetings, and students have brought up the prospect of holding fund raisers, all in an attempt to have May Commencement moved back outside. Despite their efforts, it still seems that May Commencement will take place in the Dunn Center.

Some students are still not ready to give in just yet and are considering alternative solutions to the problem. Will this year's May Commencement be remembered as an anomaly in the college's history or will this be the start of a new tradition? No one can say for sure, but the graduates of 2003 are already taking steps to see that they will not have to endure the same fate as the class of 2002.

be honored are graduating seniors. This will be a wonderful opportunity for students, faculty, staff, parents and friends to celebrate the accomplishments of our graduates as they prepare to say farewell to Wesleyan.

John Thompson, director of Athletics and Men's Basketball Coach, will be the speaker for this year's convocation. Coach Thompson was selected by Dan Dalton, Senior Class President.

## 2002 convocation to honor achievements of graduates

The 2002 Honors Convocation will be held Sunday, May 5, at 2 p.m. in Minges Auditorium, Dunn Center.

This is the one time in the academic year when the Wesleyan Community comes together to recognize those students who have achieved a high level of academic success and who have demonstrated excellent leadership abilities.

Many of the students who will

### Commencement schedule

Saturday, May 11

Commencement Speaker: Dr. John Hope Franklin

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|----------------|--|
| 9 a.m.         | Baccalaureate Service, Leon Russell Chapel                           |
| 10-11:30 a.m.  | Reception (by invitation only), President's House                    |
| 10 a.m.-Noon   | Alumni Association Event, Bellemonte House                           |
| 11 a.m.-1 p.m. | Lunch Buffet (\$7.95 per person), Cafeteria, Hardee's Building       |
| 12:15 p.m.     | Candidates for Graduation Assemble                                   |
| 1:30 p.m.      | Procession begins, Minges Auditorium, Center for the Performing Arts |

The College Store, located in the Hardee's Building, will be open from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

## Writers' Series features author Michael Malone

The North Carolina Wesleyan College Visiting Writers' Series for spring 2002 will feature Michael Malone, who will read in the Carlton Board Room, on Monday, April 22, at 7 p.m.

Please mark your calendars. The reading is free and open to the public, with a signing and a reception to follow at the President's home.

In a letter from Michael Malone on mysteries, he writes:

"We think of a 'mystery novel' as a book with a murder in it. But all stories, like all lives, are mysteries. We listen to stories to meet strangers and learn their plots. What happened before, what happens next? We are private eyes searching for clues to our connections. Safe in fiction we are testing our hearts.

"Huckleberry Finn is a murder

mystery in which the young hero fakes his own death and learns of his own father's murder. Oedipus Rex is a murder mystery in which the detective discovers that he himself is the killer. Who did it? How was it done? And most of all, why was it done? The heart of fiction is always to get at the secrets.

"Because murder is the highest crime against our shared humanness, it is to murder that the community responds most collectively and dramatically. We search, we unleash the law, we expose and expel the violator. What could be better for a storyteller than a world of such secrets, such discoveries, such consequences? (It is no coincidence that there is a murder mystery in almost every one of

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