

National Briefs

Economic Update

When confronted about a possible recession in an economy poll presented by the Associated Press, it is stated that 69% of all Americans are very worried about the state of the union, while 30% are not at all worried about this possibility. The Consumer Confidence Index has dropped to the low 60 percentile since the U.S. budget debate in congress last October. Most consumers have low expectation in this immediate future.

Another concern many people share is the unemployment rate in the United States. The nation's unemployment rate has risen to 5.9%, up from last year's at 5.3%. The percentage of people concerned about the job opening rate has jumped by 4% from 28%-32%. Many people are keeping their "hands on their wallets," while businesses are doing all they can to advertise, give discounts and run promotionals to maybe open those wallets a little.

Ken Goldstein, a well known economist, commented upon the fact that not many "help wanted" signs are seen anymore. This fact demonstrates that the labor market has been weakening for the last six months and that it may be another six months before the economy shows signs in changing for the better.

Scientific Update

Information collected from the *Black Mountain News*

The American Honeybee is now the focus of a growing national problem. The Honeybee itself is not the problem, rather, by the assault of a breed of mites descended from a strain of African Bees released by mistake 30 years ago in Brazil. This mite has spread through the Texas border and is now an increasing concern to scientists. This mite, named tracheal mite or *Acrapis Woodi*, exists in the bee's trachea and restricts the oxygen intake of the bee. Because of this reduced oxygen intake, it handicaps the bee's ability to make honey, or to pollinate plants.

The causes for this growing spread of mites has been cited as modern transportation. The only foreseeable solution being a cure for the bee, or a new breed of mite resistant bees.

State Legislative Update

Utah-Information collected from *New York Times*

A new piece of legislation, a bill which proposes the restriction of abortions performed in the state of Utah, will go before the joint committee of Utah Legislature

on the anniversary of Roe vs. Wade. This proposal is actually one part of a two part bill which would prohibit most elective abortions in the state.

If this bill is made into law, abortion could only be performed if the pregnancy was life threatening to the mother, or if the child would have profound physical or mental disabilities which would make survival

difficult.

Under new federal law which gives states constitutional rights to invoke restrictions upon abortion, Utah Governor Norman H. Bangerter has the right to decide whether limitations are appropriate for his state. Bangerter has threatened to veto any bill which he considers to be unconstitutional.

Special Lectures

On February 7-8, Dr. Thomas Inge, a visiting scholar from Randolph Macon College will be on campus to give a series of lectures. On February 7th at 7:30pm he will give a slide/lecture presentation on "The Cultural Values of the Comics" in the Science Building Lecture Hall. On February 8th, he will

meet with two of professor Lunblad's classes; his lectures will be "Eudora Welty's Comic Sensibility" and "Walt Disney's American Dream."

On February 11th, at 7:30, in the Science Lecture Hall, professors Brad Daniel and Darwin Glassford will lead the second meeting.

For all those who are interested in the first signs of spring, check the front lawn of the library for a sign...