



# THE NEWS

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## College Graduates 253

By ROBERT KOENIG

Mars Hill College brought its 128th academic year to a close Sunday afternoon with commencement exercises in Moore Auditorium. Mars Hill College president Fred B. Bentley presented diplomas to 253 graduates.

Following the presentation of individual diplomas, Bentley addressed the graduates and their families. He said that the graduates had "made this a better place just because you were here to grow with us."

Bentley went on to quote a verse from a poem written by a member of the graduating class, Carol Roane. The poem, entitled 'There Is A Place' appeared in the 1984 edition of the college literary magazine, 'Cadenza.'

The poem mentions a special place filled with laughter, tears, memories and tomorrows. Bentley told the graduates, "It would be my hope that this is your special place. You have invested four years of life in this community. I love you and appreciate that special pain which comes with your graduation."

Mars Hill's greatest living benefactor, Dr. J. Wesley Grayson of Laguna Hills, Calif., also addressed the commencement audience. Grayson told the graduates that they need to "Start out right" by renewing their resolve each morning. He urged the new graduates to develop good points of view toward family, community, business and government.

The retired California financier told the graduates, "In developing your own life, bear in mind that success often depends on what you do or choose not to do, and on how you do it - how you start your next undertaking, your next campaign. Try each day to improve and strengthen your character. In working to accomplish this, reach up to ideals, Christian ideals, and let them influence you in all your activities. And if you do that, you will take a long step in becoming a successful and respected member of your community."

Grayson and his wife, a Mars Hill native,

recently contributed an additional \$441,000, bringing their total contributions to the college to nearly \$3 million.

During the commencement exercises, Bentley presented the Scholarship-Character Award to Donna Jayne Boyd, a native of Pequesta, Fla. The award is presented annually to the student ranking highest in scholarship, manners and character. Boyd, an elementary education major, graduated with a 3.97 grade point average out of a possible 4.0.

Earlier Sunday morning, Dr. Robert Seymour, pastor of the Binkley Memorial Baptist Church and former pastor of the Mars Hill Baptist Church, delivered the sermon during the Baccalaureate Service. Entitled, '1984: Ominous Opportunity', the sermon was based on Luke 4:19 and was divided into four parts.

In the first, Seymour discussed "Big Brother" government surveillance and security and asked, 'Are we moving toward a society in which there is no privacy?'

Staying with George Orwell's work of post-war satire, Seymour noted that the sort of linguistic manipulations which Orwell described in his book have crept into our everyday speech. As an example, Seymour noted the Reagan administration's practise of referring to the MX missile as "The Peacemaker."

Seymour also quoted from Michael Harrington's book, 'The Politics At God's Funeral' and told the graduating class, "We will have togetherness one way or the other; either built on mutual respect and love, or built on terror and fear."

"What will it be?" Seymour asked, "Even though there are evidences of the 1984 of George Orwell, if young people still believe in the power of God in Jesus Christ, it is not too late to change the direction of our threatened and threatening world."

Twenty-eight Madison County residents were among the graduates receiving diplomas during the ceremony. (See 28 on Page 4)



DOGWOOD BLOSSOMS signaled the return of cold weather. spring last week following weeks of rain and

## 2nd Rabid Skunk Found; Pet Vaccinations Urged

By ROBERT KOENIG

For the second time in less than a month, a rabid skunk has been discovered in the Laurel section of Madison County.

Ed Morton of the Madison County Health Department reported that a skunk shot on May 7 was found to have been rabid following laboratory tests conducted by health officials in Raleigh.

Morton said the skunk was shot by Buddy Blackwell on Monday night when the animal at-

tacked Blackwell. The county health officials shipped the animal's head to Raleigh on Tuesday for testing. Morton was notified on Friday afternoon that the tests for rabies proved positive.

Morton said that officials do not believe that the skunk had attacked any animals or people before being killed.

Dr. Bud Allen conducted a special clinic to vaccinate household pets Monday evening in Belva. Earlier, clinics were held throughout the county in response to the first rabid skunk discovered near Guntertown in April.

The latest rabid skunk was discovered about two miles from the first.

Morton repeated his earlier warning, stating, "People should watch out for wild animals and be on the alert, not only for skunks, but for foxes, bats and other wild animals that carry rabies. Be very careful if you notice animals acting strangely. Notify the health department, dog warden or sheriff's department and, if possible, kill the animal, being sure not to destroy the head."

Madison County has two full-time veterinarians, Dr. Bud Allen in Gabriel's Creek and Dr. Larry Frost in Mars Hill. Dr. Allen can be reached at 689-5537. Dr. Frost's office telephone number is 689-5711

Health officials test animals' heads to determine if rabies is present.

Morton also urged all residents to have their house pets, both cats and dogs, vaccinated against rabies.

## Gahagan Home Burns



Reward

PIECES OF THE COLLAPSED ROOF and chimney are all that remain following a May 6 fire. The family has posted a \$1,000 reward for information concerning the fire.

## Mars Hill College Tightens Belt, Makes Profit Again

By ROBERT KOENIG

Mars Hill College is back in the black as the 1983-84 school year comes to a close. Dr. Fred B. Bentley delivered the good news Saturday to a joint meeting of the college's boards of trustees and advisors.

"It's amazing the difference one academic year can make," Bentley told the board members. "Last year, when the college closed its books, there was a deficit of \$460,000, the first the school had experienced in modern times." The college president said that decreased enrollment was responsible for the deficit.

Bentley instituted a cutback

plan which included a salary freeze and reductions in staff and faculty members. The reduction in faculty resulted in an increase in the student-teacher ratio at the Baptist college, but Bentley pointed out that the school's current 15:1 student-teacher ratio is better than the national average of 18:1.

"The plan is working," Bentley said. "We have operated with a 40 percent reduction in supplies and expenses this year, no new equipment purchases from college income, and a 50 percent reduction in travel." The college president said the cutbacks would result in a sav-

ings of \$800,000.

Bentley also reported that the school's expanded recruitment program has produced a ten percent increase in enrollments for the upcoming year. He said that the college's housing office is also reporting an increase in deposits for the 1984-85 school year.

Gifts to the college have also played an important part in Mars Hill's economic turnaround. Most notable among contributions was a gift of \$440,000 from Dr. J. Wesley Grayson and his wife, the former Polly Wall of Mars Hill. (See COLLEGE on Page 3)

## State Contracts For U.S. 25-70 Improvements

By ROBERT KOENIG

The North Carolina Board of Transportation has awarded a \$1.2 million contract to upgrade U.S. 25-70 between Marshall and Walnut.

The contract to grade, drain and pave the highway was awarded to Taylor and Murphy Construction Co. of Asheville. The award was made Friday during the board's monthly meeting in Raleigh at which the board approved more than \$31.9 million in highway improvement contracts.

The contract, which also calls for culvert construction, will extend from State Road 1146 south of Walnut to U.S. 25-70 business in Marshall. Zeno Ponder, a member of the transportation board, said,

"This contract is the first of three which will be let to complete an overall 9.2 mile project from N.C. 208 to U.S. 25-70 Business in Marshall. I'm very pleased at the board's decision to award this project to contract."

Ponder explained that the contract awarded Friday will upgrade the existing roadway to modern standards 24-feet wide with paved shoulders. The project will also create a new Walnut by-pass. DOT employees are currently completing right-of-way survey work for the second part of the project that calls for improving U.S. 25-70 from Walnut to the Old Mill Road.

Taylor and Murphy Construction Co. is currently com-

pleting work in Marshall on the town's new sewer system. Work on the U.S. 25-70 pro-

ject is scheduled to begin in June and be completed in July, 1985.

The total award of the contract approved Friday is \$1,271,612.50

## Slave Home

1920 PHOTOGRAPH shows the Gahagan home. The home was built in 1850 by Bill Gahagan to house a slave.

