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The Blue Banner

"Where there is an open mind, there will always be a frontier." — Kettering

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UNCA to graduate largest class in school's history

Davey Ramsey
Staff Writer

The 1991 graduating class begins commencement ceremonies practice May 10. Actual graduation ceremonies are scheduled for May 11 on the quad in front of Ramsey Library.

"This should be the largest graduating class ever at UNCA," said Doris Harmon, administrative assistant to the registrars office. "There should be over 350 graduates, although the exact number of graduates can not be determined until final grades are received May 3."

The first step toward graduation begins with a prerehearsal breakfast sponsored by the Office of Student Affairs. The breakfast will be held May 10 from 8:30 to 9:30 in the Highsmith Center cafeteria.

"All graduating seniors and department chairs are invited to this breakfast," said Thomas Cochran, associate vice chancellor for academic affairs, and organizer of the 1991 commencement

ceremonies. "During the breakfast each chair will be asked to bestow departmental distinctions on one or two students who they feel have done outstanding work in their department. Later the vice chancellor will issue university honors based on faculty votes," said Cochran.

Immediately following the breakfast, students will travel to Lipinsky Auditorium for a commencement rehearsal. Following rehearsal, seniors will cross the quad to Phillips Hall for the marshalling of the class. Marshalling is a ceremony involving inspirational speeches intended to challenge graduates in their future endeavors.

After the marshalling ceremony seniors will assemble on the terrace of Ramsey Library for a class picture before adjournment of practice exercises, said Cochran.

Once graduation practice is over, the stage is set for the real thing.

The day starts with a reception at the chancellor's house, from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. for graduating seniors and their parents, said

Cochran. After the reception, line up begins promptly at 5:30 p.m. and commencement starts at 6 p.m.

"The commencement ceremony should take approximately two hours," said Cochran. Afterward there will be a reception in Phillips Hall for all those in attendance.

In addition to the actual handing of diplomas, graduates will also hear an address by a guest speaker.

"Jason McManus, editor in chief of Time Warner Inc., will be the guest speaker for 1991 graduation ceremonies," said Tom Byers, special assistant to the chancellor. "McManus is quite a remarkable individual since there have only been three previous editors in chief of this company in its 66-year history."

The 1991 graduation ceremony also includes something different than graduations in the past.

"This year we will be issuing the first Master of Liberal Arts (MLA) degrees in the history of UNCA," said Cochran.



Walk-America®

Photo by LeeAnn Donnelly

Participants in the March of Dimes April 28 walk-a-thon enter UNCA's check point.

Hopes lands Disney movie contract

LeeAnn Donnelly
Staff Writer

What are the chances of a major film studio picking up a UNCA professor's first screenplay? For David Hopes, the chances have proven great.

Hopes, associate professor of literature, recently signed with Disney Studios to develop *Beowulf*, the literary classic, into a script for movie production.

An agreement with Disney Studios came as a surprise for the first-time screenwriter. After completing the piece, Hopes sent it to Peter Miller, his agent in New York City. Hopes said Miller, who also works as an assistant producer, returned it saying he didn't think a demand for the script existed.

"He said, 'Look, the script's OK, but no one would ever want to do a movie about *Beowulf*.'"

Then, about six months later, Hopes said Miller contacted him with news of a company looking to



City life

Photo by Miranda Wyatt

Spring sun shines on City-County Plaza.

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UNCA honors excellence

Renee Fallos
Staff Writer

The UNCA Leadership and Academic Awards Presentation will be held on May 2, at 7:30 p.m. in the Heritage Ballroom at the Grove Park Inn. A reception will follow.

The UNCA Office of Student Development and the UNCA Alumni Association are sponsoring the presentation.

"The purpose is to recognize and honor excellence in leadership and in academic achievement," said Nina East, director of student development.

"It's an open invitation. You don't have to receive an invitation in order to come. The whole idea is that this is a university-wide event so we want as many people as possible to come," said East.

The basis for the awards is academics, but each department sets its own criteria.

"Not every department is giving an award there. Some have their own award ceremony or they choose to recognize excellence and academics in a different way. There are different departments in Student Affairs as well as in Academic Affairs who give awards," said East.

Some organizations who give awards include Student Development, Student Government Association and Counseling Center.

The awards can be certificates, scholarships or books. Awards are

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Businessman offers prize for computer innovation

Stacy Libby
Staff Writer

Hugh Loebner, founder of the Loebner prize, spoke April 24 in Carmichael Hall concerning "Can Computers Think?" [The Loebner prize] is a fund I've established for the person who develops the first hardware or software that can satisfy the Turing Test," said Loebner.

In 1950, Alan Turing wrote an article examining the concept of artificial intelligence. He discussed a very simple test, in terms of the concept behind it.

It involved a computer in one room and a human in the other, with the man acting as an interrogator, said Loebner. "If it gets to the point you can't tell the difference between the computer and a man or seems like a man is answering, then you could say the

computer could think."

"There has been a lot of arguments on whether the test means anything and whether computers are intelligent or not," said Loebner.

The test had never been done, but greatly discussed, he said. "Talk, talk, talk, talk, but nobody was doing anything about it."

The prize will be \$100,000. It seems to me, however, that anyone that has a program to make computers think would not need my money, he said.

"[The prize] seemed to me to be valuable to get people moving in this direction," he said. So each year, the annual prize will be given to the program that merely works better than the others, he said.

"I'm hoping that by doing this, that someone will say 'I can do better than that' and the next year

create a better program," he said.

I always thought it would be interesting to create artificial intelligence, he said. "[But then] they said, 'Oh, they'll never be able to do that. [The computer] will have to be as tall as the Empire State Building.' You don't hear that anymore."

Originally I found the thought of artificial intelligence attractive because I was lazy, he said. "I thought the machines could work instead of humans, like a kind of slave labor."

Now though, since I don't have any children, these computers could kind of act as my children, he said. "Humans generally think of God to be the one that created them. Then with computers, their

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Study break

Photo by Miranda Wyatt

Mike Dorf (L) and Joey Norman play ball on the quad.

UNCA supports United Way

Julie Partin
Staff Writer

The contributions of the state employees at UNCA and the other 16 state institutions provide funding for United Way programs ranging from rape crisis to YMCA, said Tim Drummond, campaign assistant for the Buncombe County United Way.

Drummond said that UNCA employees gave, on a per capita basis, \$55.69.

"On a per capita basis, UNCA ranks right at the top of the list," said Drummond.

This was surpassed only by UNC Greensboro.

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