

The Blue Banner



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NEWS BRIEFS

by Sean Robinson
Staff Reporter

NATIONAL
Sinclair Broadcast Group Inc. Oct. 19 that it would not air a documentary about Sen. John Kerry's wartime activities 30 years in its entirety. The company, under ongoing scrutiny for its plans to launch a program that Kerry supporters are calling defamatory and false, said it would also run a program called "A POW Story: Political Pressure, and the Media" that discusses allegations surrounding Kerry's service in Vietnam.

A possible 2.6 million more doses of flu vaccine will be available in January, according to federal health officials Oct. 19. Officials searching internationally for the vaccine in response to losing a million shots from a British manufacturer, meant for U.S. distribution, but found to be contaminated.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that people get vaccinated by November, however, because the flu season peaks in January, and people who are vaccinated take two weeks to build an immunity. It is unclear how much these 2.6 million doses will help prevent the illness this flu season.

Last month's national economy showed only a 0.2 percent increase in consumer prices last month, but a sharp rise in the cost of housing pushed the core inflation level to rise 0.3 percent, the largest one month increase in inflation since April 2004.

The government report that released this statistic Oct. 19 also noted that, while the price of oil has increased this month, overall energy costs fell 0.4 percent. But, Wall Street analysts claimed that the late climb in oil prices would help regulate the inflation rate next month.

INTERNATIONAL
Unidentified kidnappers seized Argentine Hassan, head of the international charity group Care International, and broadcast images of Hassan sitting anxiously in a dark room, as well as pictures of her identifying documents Oct. 19. A Care International spokesman said that Hassan, who holds citizenship in Iraq and Britain, considers Iraq her home, has lived there for 30 years and would never consider returning to Britain. So the kidnappers have not aligned themselves with any terrorist group, and have they made any demands.

Israeli opposition leader Shimon Peres said Oct. 19 that he feared Israeli extremists might attempt to assassinate Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for his plan to withdraw Israeli troops from Gaza next year. Peres, head of the Israeli Labour Party, said the tense political atmosphere surrounding Sharon's plan resembles a 1995 Israel that witnessed the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, killed by an ultra-nationalist Jew opposed to peace negotiations with the Palestinians.

UNCA honors new Highsmith Union with celebration

by Matthew Beardsley
Staff Reporter

UNCA celebrated the dedication of the new Highsmith University Union with a day of festivities Oct. 14.

The building is "the embodiment of years of planning and dreaming," according to President of North Carolina's University System Molly Broad during a speech at the new Highsmith Union.

"Students will be able to ponder eternal verities," said Broad. "It will be good for students to have a place to just hang out."

UNCA Chancellor James Mullen implored those in attendance to feel at home in the new facility.

"A proud tradition meets a future without limits," said Mullen. "Now it is up to you to give this building life."

The new 74,000-square-foot building is the most recently completed project funded by the Higher Education Bond Referendum, passed in November 2000.

The bond gave UNCA \$49.9 million.

The Highsmith Union replaces an older, smaller building with the same name and, according to the Office of Campus Life, is the answer to many of UNCA's social



BRIAN DAVIS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chancellor James Mullen, President of North Carolina's university system Molly Broad and student body president Porscha Yount oversee the ribbon-cutting ceremony in Highsmith.

needs.

"I started working here in 1979 and at that time, we were in Lipinski, and then they opened the original Highsmith Center," said Sharyn Groh, former Highsmith director. "It was even too small when we went in there in 1982."

The new Highsmith will offer much-needed space for students and organizations.

"We kept working and working and working about getting it expanded and then to expand the dining facilities," said Groh. "We came back to this, to try to fit this big, huge building in a space between the dining hall and Mills Hall."

"The other building served its need right away, but we needed something bigger, and here it is."

John Bucher, associate director of campus life, plans to use the new Highsmith Center as a focal point for campus activity.

"I get to enjoy doing the fun stuff and making it a fun place, a place people want to come to," said Bucher. "In the first year (we hope to) introduce ourselves to the whole campus, not just the students who live in Mills and

Founders.

"Hopefully we'll really start to introduce the building to students who live in West Ridge and South Ridge and the Village and then to students who live off campus."

He also hopes the new building will create an on-campus scene for UNCA's commuter students.

"I think the commuter students don't yet realize that this building is just as much for them as for the students who live on campus," said Bucher. "That's my goal, to make this a place students just want to come to, whether there's an event or they want to study or just to hang out."

"Just come here, this is your place. Hopefully, I can accomplish that in a year."

The building is named for former UNCA President and Chancellor, William E. Highsmith, who Mullen called "The UNCA Chancellor" during his speech.

The building's interior will include a copy of Raphael's "School of Athens" in 20-by-40 foot mural form.

Students and faculty of the art department, along with community volunteers, will paint the mural, according to Mullen.

The building is technically labeled a "renovation," according to

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UNCA welcomes ambassador scholars from Central America

by Angele Mainhart
Staff Reporter

Rotary International sponsored two ambassadorial scholars to attend UNCA this year, as well as two students from UNCA to study in other countries.

"This particular year, because of an unusual gift two years ago, we're actually funding four scholars in 2004 and 2005," said Shirley Browning, professor of economics and chair of the district ambassadorial scholarship committee. "We're funding two that we will send out, and we're also paying for the two that are here from Guatemala and Honduras."

The two scholars attending UNCA agree that this experience is beneficial. It allows a bridge between cultural identities different than their own.

"It's a really good experience," said Cecille Isel Flores Aguilar, ambassadorial scholar from Honduras.

"The culture shock still gets to me sometimes, but it's all part of the experience. I think it's good. The people are the biggest cultural difference because there are so many different types of people here."



MAGGIE WEST/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Chari Maria Flores-Palacios and Cecille Isel Flores Aguilar act as ambassador scholars to UNCA.

The rotary scholarship offers funds of up to \$25,000 per student and usually lasts for a full academic year. Sometimes it even covers a full calendar year, according to Browning.

This scholarship enables students to expand their academic knowledge, while emerged in a different culture, without having to worry about expenses.

"In Guatemala, I have one degree already, which is legal translation, and I'm six months away from getting my second degree in business," said Chari Maria Flores-Palacios from Guatemala. "So, I don't think this will help me with my credits because one of the management classes that I'm taking I've already had

in Guatemala, but this will make it look more extensive. I've always wanted to study here in the U.S. It was awesome because they paid for everything."

Students must fill out a 20-page application that includes references and documentation of a certain amount of literacy in the language of their host country, according to Browning. The Rotary Club interviews the applicants, and, if approved, they are then nominated for a district interview.

"The competition is real tough," said Browning. "The young lady that we selected to go to Russia is fluent in Russian, Italian and can speak and read Spanish. She's also going to graduate from George Washington University, has an outstanding GPA, worked in the Italian Council and held one or two government positions in Washington."

SEE STUDENTS ON PAGE 12

Early voting begins as debates come to an end

by Rheannon Yokeley
Staff Reporter

The 2004 presidential debate series concluded Oct. 13 at Arizona State University.

There are just a couple of more weeks of campaigning left before the American people will go to the polls and select the president for the next four years.

Will the debates be a deciding factor for voters this year?

"I don't think the debates will make up most people's minds about the candidates. It seems to me that they are mostly held for show. Most people already know who they'll vote for before they take place," said Colin Macomber, senior philosophy major.

After each debate, the various network television polls reflected a very tight race, almost evenly splitting support for Bush and Kerry, according to the Associated Press.

"I, myself, don't particularly care for either of the capitalistic puppets," said Dan Kostin, junior classics major.

President George W. Bush and Sen. John Kerry closed the debate by addressing the nation.

"I ask you for your trust. I ask you for your help. I ask you to allow me the privilege of leading this great nation of ours, of helping us

to be stronger here at home and to be respected again in the world, and most of all, to be safer forever," said Kerry in the debate.

Bush concluded by speaking about a painting in the Oval Office of a Texas mountain scene.

"I love the optimism in that painting, because that's how I feel about America. And we've been through a lot together during the last three years. We've come through a recession, a stock market decline and an attack on our country... My hope for America is a prosperous America, a hopeful America and a safer world. I want to thank you for listening tonight. I'm asking for your vote," said Bush.

The debate season kicked off in Coral Gables, Fla. at The University of Miami. Jim Lehrer from PBS moderated, with Iraq dominating

the discussion, which included the larger topics of foreign relations and homeland security, according to the AP. Bush and Kerry exchanged attacks arguing over what needs to happen to resolve the issues in Iraq and bring our troops home, according to the AP.

The second debate took place in St. Louis, Mo. in a town hall setting at Washington University. Charlie Gibson of ABC News se-

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"Environmental issues will be important for UNCA students.... One thing that pushed me towards Kerry is his emphasis on environmental issues."

Shay Slifko
sophomore psychology major