



# The Decree

VOLUME XVII NUMBER 10

N.C. WESLEYAN COLLEGE, ROCKY MOUNT, N.C.

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 1978

## Is there life in outer space?

by Robin Collier

Do you believe there is other life in the universe? Professor Michael Zeilik, visiting lecturer on astronomy says, "yes. . . and no."

Professor Zeilik is an instructor of astronomy at the University of New Mexico. He earned his undergraduate degree in Physics at Princeton University, and received his M.S. and Ph.D. in astronomy at Harvard University. Sponsored by the North Carolina Center of Higher Education, Professor Zeilik was visiting North Carolina on a three-day series of lectures.

"Is There Other Life in the Universe?" was the topic of Professor Zeilik's lecture here on Tuesday, September 12th. Trying to prove that there is life on other planets, he explained that as a star dies, it blows up and 80-90 percent is blown back into space. Out of this it is possible for new stars and planets to be formed. This is a sort of "cosmic recycling," as Professor Zeilik explained it.

As a result, we are all "recycled stardust" or "children of the stars, and we all have something in us from the creation of the universe."

Professor Zeilik reduced the area of concern from the entire universe to just our galaxy explaining, "The universe is very big and it's hard for astronomers to get around to seeing it all." However, even by reducing the area in question to just our galaxy it still leaves a large area to be covered in this topic.

By theory, planets in an ecosphere will eventually have some kind of life on them. An ecosphere is a zone in the universe where life can survive. "It is the natural process that intelligent life must be the ultimate in biological evolution," according to Professor Zeilik.

There does seem to be a problem with communication between these intelligent civilizations. Our closest neighbors would be at least 10,000 light years away. If the lifespan of that civilization is short, it would die out before

communication signals could reach them.

However, if the lifespan is long and communication is possible then, "Why haven't we been visited?" asked Professor Zeilik. His theory is that the other civilizations are so much farther advanced than we are that they consider us to be "primitive." Perhaps we are "off-limits" to the technically advanced civilizations or the "Great Galactic Club" as Professor Zeilik stated it. The UFO's that have been spotted are violating the "off-limit signs posted in outerspace. Perhaps they are teeny-boppers jetting around in the family space ship."

In any event, we can come to one of two conclusions. We are either alone in the universe or there are many other beings but no communication with them is possible, because we are not far enough advanced.

When asked if he believed in life on other planets, Professor Zeilik stated that he did believe there are many lower forms of life in our



universe. However, a highly intelligent, technologically advanced civilization would be unlikely due to their short lifespan.

So the question remains. What do you believe? For

anyone interested in reading more about this topic Professor Zeilik has written a book entitled, *Astronomy, the Evolving Universe*. The second edition will be out in January of 1979.

## Orientation weekend---a success

by Jean Goolsby

"What's it all about Alfie," could possibly have been the theme song for most of the new students during the recent orientation at North Carolina Wesleyan College. From the minute they arrived, each had a very strict schedule to follow.

Receptions, lectures, and tests were the three words which were most often heard.

But with seriousness set aside Saturday night, most of the group boogied the night away with Skip Carney, a local Disc Jockey. According to Carney, it was one of the

liveliest groups he had worked with.

The only complaints I heard were it didn't last long enough, or do you call this (referring to the patio) a dance floor. After much dancing and a super dance contest won by Keith Wilson

and Mary Parks, several students, the D.J. and an orientation worker headed to "the wall" for a midnight stroll. Surprisingly enough, all but two or three completed the walk. If you've never walked "the wall," you should try it sometime.

To many, the morning worship service in the James Haily Memorial Outdoor Chapel was one of the highlights of Sunday. Melody Begley led the music and also sang "And They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love." John Betlyon, the new Campus Minister spoke briefly on the topic, "For God is at Work in You." After Dr. Betlyon's talk, an informal communion service was shared.

Later in the evening, a reception was given in the home of President and Mrs. Petteway. Susan Richter, a new resident student from Florida, said she has fallen in love with the tree-filled campus and the Petteway's home with its natural wood floors.

Again comments about lines were made while the students were waiting to see their advisors on Monday and

to register on Tuesday. Cathy Brown complimented the orientation program by saying it was well organized and it looked as if everyone knew what he was doing.

By Wednesday, most were ready to relax and to put out of their minds any thoughts about long lines. Others by this point were bored and couldn't wait for classes to start.

When asked how she liked the weekend events, Monica St. Jean replied, "There was enough going on so I didn't have time to get homesick."

Barbara Stage, the new Student Life Coordinator, said she was well pleased with the way the weekend went. One of the workers for Orientation weekend said that he really didn't realize what he had gotten into when he signed up as a volunteer, but now that it was all over with, he was glad that he had participated.

With the record high enrollment of around 700 students, it is quite apparent that not only was Orientation Weekend a success but the rest of the year looks very promising.

