

# COUGAR CRY



Volume 29 Issue 5

March 28, 2000

## WCC Gets New Dean of Instruction

By: Sandy Sheets

Gordon G. Burns, president of Wilkes Community College, has announced the employment of Walter M. Plexico, Jr. as Dean of Instruction. He assumed the position effective January 1, 2000.

Prior to coming to Wilkes, Plexico held the position of Dean of Academic Services at Haywood Community College in Clyde, North Carolina. In that position, he was responsible, under the direction of the president, for the educational leadership and direction of the total education program, the supervision and evaluation of instruction, the planning and development of new programs, and the building and execution of the instructional budgets. He has also held positions as Assistant Dean for Special Programs and Assistant Dean of Instruction at Rockingham Community College, and as Director of Learning Resources, Chairperson of the Division of Developmental Studies, Psychology Instructor, Audio-Visual Director, Counselor and Director of Evening Program at Spartanburg Methodist College.



Plexico received his Doctor of Education degree in Higher Education from the University of Georgia, a Master's degree in Library Science at the University of South Carolina, a Master's degree in Education with certification in counseling at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in

*Continued on Page 2...*

## "A TEACHABLE MOMENT"

By: Jody Harrington

The one thing that Dr.



Karen Staten says she is continuously in search of a teachable moment. Her last quest led her straight to the office of WCC Dean of Instruction, Dr. Walt Plexico. Seeking a teachable moment, Dr. Staten and Mr.

Alan Richey attempted to devise a debate between ACLU (American Civil Liberties Union) representative Deborah Ross and a Wilkes County Commissioner. Upon contacting the Commissioners office, Dr. Staten was informed that they would not participate in such a debate due to possible litigations. After talking to Dr. Staten, Commission Chairman Robert Handy contacted WCC President Dr. Gordon Burns office to express his displeasure. Responding to the call, Dr. Burns had Dr. Plexico inform Dr. Staten and Mr. Richey that he did not feel that the debate could take place if one of the sides could or would not participate.

In speaking with Dr. Staten and Mr. Richey it was very obvious that they felt betrayed by their peers. When asked about academic freedom, Mr. Richey responded, "The college is a bastion for the free exchange of ideas" and, "what prompted the invitations was only remotely related to the flap over the Ten Commandments issue in the county as the topic arose in my Modern Religion class. The actual topic which prompted the invitations was the 'Establishment Clause' of the First Amendment." As Dr. Staten and Mr. Richey fought for their right to have Ms. Ross come and speak, they began to realize they were fighting a losing battle. Following a discussion that in Mr. Richey's words became intense at times, Dr. Staten finally asked point blank if the debate could take place and the answer she was given at that time was "NO". Immediately ending the discussion, Dr. Staten and Mr. Richey both resigned from their positions with our award-



*Continued on Page 2...*



### WCC Opinions, Page 12

Assault on Academic Freedom at Wilkes Community College?



### Music Review, Page 16

Scream 3 Soundtrack  
Top 15 of the 90's  
March's Top Twelve