

HILLTOP

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Joanne Croom: Research Comes to Mars Hill

By **Kromer**
Under **Writer**

appointing a world where small college
into this uses are often left behind in
longed for of scientific research by their
ad found and richer counterparts, ex-
be, the sons to the norm are indeed re-
ne foreing.

the wide exception to this current trend
aps from occur this year on Mars Hill's
pus as faculty member JoAnne
tm conducts research in the field
ed to play microbiology.

into the research is being made possi-
ers, grimly a fifty thousand dollar grant
bellowing the National Institutes of Health,
individually funded organization that
inevitably money to support medical
r knock research. The grant is designated as
ademic Enhancement Research
d and will finance Mrs. Croom's
or one this.

is not research that Mrs. Croom has
ns. He would revolves around white blood
and shot, or lymphocytes, and will study
ther, sits effects that different substances
ersonvil on the DNA that carries genetic
and say, mation when cells divide.

oom's interest in the project was
a hand toned while she took classes at the
h a bench Ridge Biomedical Graduate
possibly of Program. This program is af-
h that heed with the University of Ten-
by stealbe and will fulfill requirements
vels, mitte doctorate degree when she com-
a coarse her courses there, Croom said.

Cabinet Prioritizes Dorms

By **Frad**
tant Editor

a common occurrence at Mars
a maintenance request is turned
d you wait and wait for repairs
made. It's a stressful situation
e. The only involved parties. This problem,
the interval, is not going unnoticed or un-
tips, and aged. Steps are being taken by
there is administration and staff to troub-
does God not and remedy the problems in
for a tearaining the dorms.

om to win? ently, the Administrative Cab-
strange, it had a meeting and on the top of
n like the agenda was the maintenance
ker that arnn. They received reports and
activity imendations from Director of
for nonmental Living, Cary Poole, and
ne next tim of Students, Merry Burgess.
ne street an were discussed at length and
to pass soproach was decided on.

ay, lock pording to Dr. Schmeltekopf,
like there of Academics, the cabinet de-
clinging to on a "three-pronged effort."
you, you mightst step in the plan is to pur-
out interes new mattresses for Edna
e, Stroup, and Huffman dormito-
These dorms are also slated for
ation beginning this summer
continuing until completion. Also
summer, new furniture is to be
eased for some of these build-

The cabinet decided on three-pronged effort

POOLE says that he has pur-
250 new mattresses at a cost
\$2,000, taken out of his overall
tion budget of \$25,000. He
n to say that "some of the mat-
s we found were close to over
years old, and this is the main
for such an extensive replace-
Nowhere on record has there
such a mass replacement be-
n the past, it has been piece-
replacement, just whenever one
eded. In doing this, we will be
y gauge when to replace them

ating the renovations done in
ast year on Brown, Melrose,
and Fox dormitories, the reno-
sated for this coming summer
ing seven out of thirteen res-
halls into reasonably good con-
n after two years. Cary Poole
at after the dorms on women's
finished, the townhouses and
ents are the next priority.
hope to purchase new carpet
ome furniture for these
gs," says Poole.

road to completing all that
to be done is very long indeed.
ot at all a fast process. Some
must be put off to meet immedi-
eeds. Many things have already
one, but there is much more
ahead. Truly, when dealing
pairs at Mars Hill, patience is
a.

The Oak Ridge Program and the
subsequent research are the latest
academic endeavors for Croom, and
these challenges are, for the mean-
time, suitable to crown an already ex-
tensive academic career that started
in Spruce Pine, North Carolina.

Croom's high school graduation
took place there, and at seventeen
she was ready for new roads. Her
father influenced her to come to Mars
Hill, which was a junior college at the
time, and the graduate responded to
her father's wishes. She completed
her general studies at Mars Hill and
transferred to North Carolina State
University to pursue her interests.

These academic interests were
consummated in the form of a Bache-
lor of Science degree in biochemistry.
However, Croom was not content to
rest on her laurels and she was soon
back at the books.

She remained at N.C. State and
continued to study there until she
earned a Master's degree in micro-
biology. After this fourth graduation,
she worked in the chemistry and
research industries of the nationally
famous "Research Triangle."

In addition to academics, marriage
was also in her plans. She married,
and soon afterwards her husband
was transferred to Asheville. The
couple had their first child, and Mrs.
Croom decided that it would be best if
she did not start working again after
the move.

The home life, however, did not ful-
fill Croom's aspirations and eventual-
ly she looked for another job. The job
that she was hired for did not meet
her original expectations, but things
worked out quite well for her.

"I started looking for a job and I
had always sworn that I would never,
ever teach because both my parents
taught and I had seen the frustrations

“

**In teaching there is always that
unknown factor and that unknown
factor is the student.**

”

that are inherent with education so
that was on my list down there right
around zero" she said in a recent in-
terview.

The profession that originally had
such negative connotations for Mrs.
Croom began to have a new look
when she was confronted with the
possible jobs that would fulfill her
criteria, criteria that had been trans-
formed with the arrival of her
children and family responsibilities.

She wanted a part-time job, and the
job that seemed to suit this desire and
still appeal to her academic interests

was that of a substitute teacher. She
got her first teaching job at Asheville-
Biltmore College, which eventually
became the University of North Caro-
lina at Asheville. She started as a
substitute teacher and also worked in
chemistry labs. This position evolved
into a prime-time teaching job. "It
was the beginning of a life-long in-
terest in teaching" she said.

After teaching at UNCA, she taught
at Warren Wilson College, at a Catho-
lic girls' school, and finally ended up
teaching patients at a psychiatric
hospital. The job at the hospital began
to put a gradual strain on her, and
after four years she decided to give
the position up. Mrs. Croom was
disillusioned with the job because she
had difficulty in dealing with the ap-
parent hopelessness of some of the
students she was hired to motivate.

At the same time, the Croom family
wanted to get away from Asheville.
Some friends had been looking at land

in the Mars Hill area and recom-
mended it to the family. The Crooms
found Mars Hill to their liking and
bought some land on Crooked Street
and built a house. Mrs. Croom was
unemployed and worked to make the
new house a home.

"After about four months of paint-
ing and decorating and that kind of
stuff I decided 'I need to get out of
here and use my head a little bit
more' so I called Mars Hill College to
see if they needed somebody to teach
part-time." The College had a position
open and Mrs. Croom accepted. The
part-time teaching job turned into a
full-time job, and after twelve years
at Mars Hill, Mrs. Croom continues to
find that teaching is a good profes-
sion.

"I enjoy students and I like fresh-
men because they still have those
rough edges" she said. "By the time
they get to the senior class they know
how to play the game too well" she
added. Unfortunately, Mrs. Croom
will be unable to teach freshmen
while she conducts her research project.

Regardless of her class load this
year, she will still achieve a sense of
fulfillment as she works on her re-
search. "It's very, very different" she
said. "In some respects you have
more control when you are doing re-
search than when you are teaching
because you know that if you invest
energy and time you are going to get



Joanne Croom at her microscope.

some results."

Mrs. Croom said that teaching was
a "different ballgame." "In teaching
there is always that unknown factor
and that unknown factor is the stu-
dent. There is always a certain ex-
citement that you get when you are
dealing with a student that you do not
necessarily get when you are dealing
with chromosomes, although I am

Continued on page 4

"The 1940's Radio Hour" Set to Open

By **Mike Merrill**
Guest Writer

Mars Hill College's Department of
Theatre Arts opens its 1987-88 sea-
son on October 23 with the bright and
sassy musical, *The 1940's Radio Hour*,
by Walton Jones. This big band era
musical comedy takes place on the
night of December 21, 1942 in the
studios of WOV, a 5,000 watt local
New York City radio station. It's the
Monday night broadcast of the week-
ly variety show, "The Mutual Man-
hattan Variety Calvacade," and fea-
tures such hits as "Chattanooga Choo
Choo," "Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy,"
"Strike Up The Band," and "Ain't
She Sweet."

The 1940's *Radio Hour* will be
directed by C. Robert Jones and in-
troduces Mars Hill College's newest
faculty professor, John T. Oertling, as
set designer and technical director.
The Mars Hill College Jazz Band, un-
der the baton of Dr. Pete LaRue, will
be playing the score.

In the cast, the role of WOV's
musical general manager Clifton A.
Feddington will be played by senior
musical theatre major David Baldree.
Rebekah Carpenter, a senior vocal
music major, will play the role of
singer/comedienne Ginger Brooks,
and Mars Hill College theatre fa-
vorite Richard Croom, is cast as "Pops."
Junior theatre major Ed Hix plays Lou
Cohn, the stage manager. Mars Hill
College's concert and marching band
director Dr. Pete LaRue will also per-
form in the role of band director Zoot
Doubleman. Featured vocalists,
Johnny Cantone and Geneva Browne
will be played by senior music educa-
tion major Gregory Stewart, and
junior musical theatre major Beverly
Todd.

... [the show] features
such hits as 'Chattanooga
Choo Choo,' 'Boogie
Woogie Bugle Boy,'
'Strike Up the Band,' and
'Ain't She Sweet.'

Others in the large cast are fresh-
men Nancy Alise McKinster as Ann
Collier, Lynn Nihart as Neal Tilden,
and Marcie O'Connell as Mazie
Smith. Senior Jim Parks plays the
hardworking crew member Stanley,
sophomores Duane Partin and Mike
Houston play Wally Fergusson and
Bubba Babcock, respectively, while
senior communications major Kellie
Shirley will show her tap dancing
talent as Connie Miller.

The 1940's *Radio Hour* will be per-
formed in Owen theatre October
23-30 at Mars Hill College located
just twenty minutes north of Asheville
on US 19-23 and one mile off NC 213.
Ticket prices will be \$5.00 for adults
and \$4.00 for students and senior citi-
zens. The box office will be open be-
ginning October 19 from 1 p.m. to 5
p.m. on non-performance dates and 1
p.m. to showtime on performance
dates. Performances are at 8:00 p.m.
Monday through Saturday and at
2:30 p.m. for the Sunday matinee.
Reservations may be made by calling
1-704-689-1239.



Spotlight on Techies

By **Becky Horner**
Staff Writer

The house lights go down and the
stage lights come up. The actors take
their places before the audience, and
the show begins. The director sweats
as he waits for someone to miss a cue.
Friends and relatives pray that the
performers won't forget their lines.
Another night at the theater begins.

Although people occasionally stop
to consider the amount of work that
the performers put in — memorizing
lines, learning stage directions, miss-
ing cues and repeating sequences —
there is one group of artists who are
rarely complimented on their work. In
fact, the only time that the technical
crew ever receives any recognition
from the audience is when they make
a mistake. In all reality, this is not the
kind of recognition a person wishes to
gain from his or her critics.

What is this elusive 'technical'
crew and what does it do? Possibly
you've heard it referred to as the
'stage crew,' but this phrase often
brings to mind the wrong impres-
sions: the guys who move props
around between scenes, open and
close the curtains, and maybe even
clean up after the show is over. Those
tasks are included in the job descrip-
tions of the 'techies,' as they're often
called by each other and those people
who possess a basic familiarity with
the stage, but there is a lot more to it
than that.

Technical crew is responsible for
doing all of the dirty work related to
putting on a stage performance. The
crew is guided by a technical direc-
tor, the knowledgeable figure upon
whose head falls the worst of the
blame if something goes seriously
wrong. In essence, however, this
group of people is responsible for the
support system of the performers: the
scenery, properties (props), lighting,
electrics, sound and costumes. In ad-
dition, all of this must be ready when
the actors need it — not opening
night, but in time for the final run-
throughs and rehearsals.

The performances bring with them
a special set of dilemmas. A bulb
burns out, a fuse blows, the sound
system develops an unbearable high-
frequency hum, the curtain won't
close or a unique prop that was
shipped in from Outer Mongolia
disappears five minutes before it is
supposed to appear on stage. These

are little things, true; but if the stage
is left in pitch-black darkness, so-
meone is not going to be very happy.
The techies' job is to make sure that
all of the non-acting aspects of the
performance go off smoothly, without a
hitch.

At MHC, the responsibilities of the
technical crew are essentially the
same as they are at any other theater.
However, since the Theatre Depart-
ment here is so small (between 20 and
25 people), most of the crew also acts.
"Those people who are interested in
the theatre work in all aspects of it:
building scenery as well as acting,"
says John E. Oertling, who is the
director of the department.

Much of the time spent in prepara-
tion is doing things that the average
person would not even think about
when considering the work that the
crew does. There is an immense
amount of research that has to be
done prior to the commencement of
the actual physical labor. Oertling
says that he spends between 40 and
60 hours researching and designing
the scenery for one show alone, and
then the crew spends fifteen hours a
week working on creating the final
product.

The 1940's *Radio Hour* is similar to
other shows in the problems which it
presents, but at the same time it is
unique. The props are the most diffi-
cult part, since "a 1940's telephone is
not an antique, it is junk," according
to Oertling, "and therefore it is very
difficult to find." There are problems
like this in any production. The un-
usual part of this show is not that the
crew members are also actors (or
vice versa), but that the crew mem-
bers are acting out their jobs on crew.
For example, the sound technician
who appears on stage during *Radio
Hour* is not only an actor playing that
part; he is actually running the sound
from the stage.

Although the products of the tech-
nical crew are almost always on view
to the audience, the work that goes in-
to making sure that the show goes off
as planned isn't usually on display.
When watching *Radio Hour*, the
viewer will actually see the crew do-
ing their work. Although it is by no
means a documentary portrayal of
"A Day in the Life of a Techie," *Radio
Hour* provides an opportunity for
everyone to get a glimpse into what
the 'behind the scenes' work in the
theatre is like.

A Re-Grand Opening: WVMH 90.5 FM

By **Jay Jackson**
Staff Writer

It's a re-Grand Opening! Perhaps
this is how we should announce this
year's radio station. Broadcasting
from the top of the Fine Arts building,
WVMH 90.5 F.M. is finally in opera-
tion. On October 5, the station was of-
ficially declared "on the air" for the
1987-88 school year. Prior to the 5th,
the station had been used for practice
only, but now it is live, hot, and ready
to roll.

In existence since 1975, the station
has had a history of hard times. Me-
chanical problems, keeping it from
operating last year, have plagued it
throughout its 12-year career. The
transformer, a key instrument used in
transmitting the station's signal, has
been in constant need of repair.

Jeff Davis, manager of the station
and full-time student at Mars Hill, is
glad to see the station finally back on
its feet. He hopes to "develop the lis-
tening audience to at least one half of
the college and a majority of the com-
munity." By next year, Davis said he
plans to have the station back to its
original status (a majority of the cam-
pus and community) by broadcasting
football games and educational pro-

grams, then to exceed its present
status.

A former D.J. for the station, Davis
has had to put the station back togeth-
er. Because it was not producing re-
sults, but was still in the college's
operating budget, the station was put
on probation by the college. It is "do
or die" for Davis. He and his staff
either put the station back on its feet,
or it will be removed from the budget.

The station, though broadcasting
only while school is in session, could
also be a training field to prepare
those going into broadcasting and
communication. Davis said there
were still several positions open for
D.J.s.

From 6 a.m. to 1 a.m., the station
plays a variety of music including
contemporary Christian, jazz, and
album-oriented rock (A.O.R.). Davis
explained A.O.R. consists of music
played only from albums, such as U2,
John Cougar Mellencamp, Billy Idol,
and Genesis, but does not include the
"one hit wonders" like Epospe, ABC
and Go West.

In spite of those hard times, things
are looking very bright. The redevel-
opment of the station should produce
great things in the future.



Marty Feebus broadcasts on WVMH.

INSIDE

Editorials p. 2

Just the Facts p. 2

Reel Talk p. 3

Crossword p.3

Football p.4