

THE HILLTOP

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LETTERS WEEK

FEBRUARY

Amateur actors to work with professional actors.

OPINIONS PAGE

Ticket costs are still under \$5. However, students of the school are expected to have a ticket for the normal chance of a lifetime. Check out what a reason for this is the school. The Southern Appalachian Theatre is a professional theatre which is located on the campus of Mars Hill College. The school's SART is the production of plays, and "Slavery Chances" is the 29th new premier. SART performs summer theatre in the region, but is hoping to perform in the region.

SPORTS

In this issue, we take a look at the new basketball and the upcoming basketball and the upcoming basketball and the upcoming basketball.

NEWS

In this issue's QUICK NEWS gives you a look at the two new dramatic plays, what's going on at the gallery, and a report on the gallery.

BACK PAGE

Out this week's crossword puzzle and where you can go for fun in this issue's LET'S RECREATE.



Long time band director leaves college amid rumors and accusations

by M. Scott Roten
editor in chief

"I want the students and faculty to know my gratitude to them for the incredible support of the band while I was there."

And with that in mind, Dr. Peter J. LaRue closed the door on his six-year career as band director and instructor at Mars Hill College.

LaRue tendered a letter to Leininger just as the Christmas vacation was getting underway stating LaRue's request for a terminal leave of absence, according to Dr. C. Earl Leininger, Dean as well as Vice President of the college.

With such a seemingly sudden decision, rumors and doubts ran rampant across the campus.

"Rumors are rumors are rumors," said President Fred Bentley. "Dr. LaRue found it necessary to leave and we granted it."

Leininger affirmed that position by saying that there were no formal complaints lodged against LaRue for any type of misconduct.

When asked whether or not there was the possibility of LaRue returning, since there seemed to be no problems with his employment, Leininger said that issue was a "moot point. If he [LaRue] wanted to be here he would not have left."

There had also been rumors as to the nature of the strength of the band program and whether or not cult-like activities had been occurring.

"LaRue was raised in an extremely strong work ethic and that was reflected in his professionalism in his music program...Cult is the wrong word to use," stated

Amber Luckadoo, student representative to the committee to hire a new band director.

"When you have a group of people with common interests spending hours and hours together, you form a bond that is incomparable to any other. That's what makes us musicians."

LaRue began his work at Mars Hill in the Fall of 1986. He replaced Raymond Babelay whose career as band director had spanned a decade and a half. With the transition from a retirement-aged director to the 30 year old LaRue, there was a little getting used to.

"It took LaRue a few years to adjust and for the students to adjust to him, but into his third year, it seemed everything had settled down," said Dr. Wayne Pressley of the music department. In those early years of LaRue's time here, Pressley said that the numbers of students wasn't what made the band great, but the quality LaRue was able to bring out.

"LaRue did a lot of stuff that wasn't required for his job. He volunteered to take on the supervision of the student teachers in music, and he worked especially hard to get jobs for graduates...He also was responsible for reviving the summer camps," said Pressley. Pressley also talked about how the little things that LaRue did were so important. LaRue was responsible for the updating of the marquee outside of Moore Auditorium.

Pressley praised LaRue's abilities as a very active recruiter who took the band to high schools around the area, and as far away as Gaston Co., N.C. and Hickory, N.C.

The greatest of LaRue's talents was the way he personally wrote or arranged all the music for the band pieces. "If I were doing



LaRue

it, I would be happy with the 50's music and hiring someone else to write the stuff for me," said Pressley.

Student reaction to LaRue's leaving ranged from good to bad, but for the most part they hated to see such a strong leader leave.

"He was more than just a band director. He was so intent on bringing the musicality out of every individual. He wanted us to be all we could be and he would settle for not less, and we loved it," stated Luckadoo. She accounted for the range of opinions in the music department by saying that each musician "marches to a different drum as with any kind of fine arts. You would be hard pressed to find two musicians the same. That's what makes each so wonderful."

The classes LaRue had been teaching have been taken by other members of the music department, but where is the "Pride of Mars Hill College," the Marching Lions heading?

□ SEE "LARUE" PAGE 2

Large Number of Community Life Events Planned This Semester

Semester
by Andrea Deaton
staff writer

The Curriculum Committee which organized the Community Life Program, or "Green Card" events has approved more events for this semester than any semester before.

There are 54 opportunities for students and community members to experience a variety of cultural activities. This greater number of activities has

come about because there were fewer events scheduled last semester and more applicants for this semester.

Dr. Larry Stern, chairperson of the Curriculum Committee said, "because of the quality of the nominated events, the committee offer additional Community Life events this semester."

Last week the Symposium Committee offered a series of films, lectures and demonstration about the Vietnam Conflict and its impact on our society in

the past, present and future. Three professors spoke on

Vietnam, its land, culture and effects on our society. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the end of the conflict.

Other new events this semester include: Two hunger awareness events, a public debate April 6 sponsored by the newly re-organized Debate Club, a Business Week lecture April 15, and a Good Friday program entitled "Stations of the Cross" April 9. Also, there are still four

CultureFest entertaining performances (See "Dear Friends" article). With this greater number of activities scheduled, a greater burden will be placed on the student monitors who hand out green cards. Monitor Michael Roten says, "you'll just have to bear with us because with so many activities being planned, there will be a greater chance of the green cards not arriving on time because we will have to schedule around our classes and plans."