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Mars Hill College Graduates 268

Two hundred and sixty-eight Mars Hill College seniors received their diplomas Sunday afternoon, as the school brought its 127th academic year to a close.

College president Dr. Bentley was the principal speaker for the afternoon's ceremonies. Following the individual presentation of diplomas, he told the capacity crowd in Moore Auditorium that, more than ever, "people need people."

While undergoing six months of "soul searching" as a result of economic pressures, the college has found that there must be a centering of goals which are consistent and will enable the community to draw closer together rather than become more diffused, he said.

"These same principals apply to each of you as you enter another phase of your human pilgrimage. In this age of rapid transition and impersonality, it is imperative that you know yourself," he stated. "We hope we have helped you assess your talents, develop your knowledge, spiritual life, and physical well-being. Now it is incumbent that you establish a goal or purpose for your life and pursue it with integrity."

He closed by telling the graduates half of the

jobs of the 1990's have yet to be created. "You must be willing to learn every day, with the pressures to be adaptive; you will need a stabilizing strength in your life which can be found in our Lord. Look to him daily for guidance and comfort."

During the afternoon ceremonies, four students were presented the Scholarship-Character Medal, which goes to the student or students who rank the highest in scholarship, manners and character. The four, who all had perfect 4.0 all-A academic averages, included Michael Good, a chemistry major from Burnsville; Kim Myers, an English major from Asheville; Lisa Hooks, a social worker major from Nebo; and Lavern Fox Warner of Candler, an elementary education major who earned her degree through the college's adult evening program while working full-time and caring for a family that includes four children.

Two of the medal winners, Myers and Hooks, are Grayson Scholars, recipients of the school's most prestigious scholarship, established by Dr. J. Wesley Grayson of Laguna Hills, Calif. Dr. Grayson and his wife Polly gave the college \$2.6 million to fund the scholarship program.

(Continued on Page 6)



THE MARS HILL College Class of 1983 enter Moore Auditorium for Sunday's graduation exercises.

Special Report : Madison County Schools

Walnut School / A Center For Community Activity

Many of our county's elementary schools also serve as centers for community activity. The schools in today's report — Walnut, Hot Springs, Laurel and Mars Hill elementary schools — all serve extra duty as the hub for community youth and service programs.

Walnut Elementary serves as a school for 156 children in grades kindergarten through eighth grade. After school hours, the school is also the site of clogging practice, Girl Scout meetings, adult and youth basketball leagues, 4-H Club meetings and aerobic dance classes.

In addition to K through eighth grade, the schools also offer both Head Start and CETA GED classes during regular school hours.

Walnut principal Sidney Harrison has a staff of six state-assigned teachers, two aides, an exceptional children's teacher and a Chapter 1 instructor. The work of the professional staff is supplemented by several community people who volunteer their services. Mrs. Starr Ray volunteers her time to serve as the school's librarian. Lucretia Griffin assisted the children in assembling the school's annual this year and other people like Sheila Wilson also give time to help in the schools.

Harrison is a full-time principal who also teaches special topic classes. He is presently completing his seventh year as the principal in Walnut. Before coming to Walnut, he taught at

Madison High School and spent 22 years as an instructor at Laurel High School.

As one of the county's smaller schools, Walnut faces problems common to all the smaller schools in Madison County. With the exception of the kindergarten, fifth and first grades, all students at Walnut are in mixed-grade classes. Kathy Adams teaches a combined second and third grade class; Wanda Capps, the school's Teacher of the Year, teaches a combined third and fourth grade class, Larry Wyatt teaches a sixth and seventh grade combination and Katherine Phythian instructs a combined class of seventh and eighth graders.

Both breakfast and lunch are served in the

school's undersized cafeteria. Breakfast is served beginning at 8 a.m. and lunch is served in two sessions beginning at 11 a.m. The News Record tour of the facility found the cafeteria clean and the food well-prepared.

The school itself was built in 1936 on the site of the former Hotel Switzerland after the former school, Jewel Hill, was destroyed by fire. Although well maintained, the school shows its age. The school's large interior makes it difficult to heat in winter and there are some old windows that need to be replaced. The school's auditorium and gymnasium are poorly lit and the stage curtain is in need of replacement.

(Continued on Page 7)

Big Bucks Mark Bingo At Cherokee

By JON ROSENBLUM

"Super Bingo" marker in hand and ears perked to the announcer's voice, Nina Finney of Waynesville is hoping Fortune will smile upon her. But she's skeptical.

"I like it, but I'm not lucky," says the veteran of about 10 years of evening bingo games at Waynesville spots like the American Legion, Moose Lodge and VFW Post.

On this wet spring afternoon, however, she's left Haywood County to join about 4,000 others — mostly middle-aged women like herself — in Cherokee for what's advertised as "The World's Largest Bingo Game."

There they spend an average of more than \$125 each to play bingo for about 12 hours. If that sounds a little extravagant (or monotonous), consider the potential rewards. \$225,000 guaranteed each time the doors open; \$1,000 for "early bird" games; \$5,000 for 20 regular games and from \$7,500 to \$50,000 for four jackpot games.

The last figure is exactly 20 times the amount allowed by North Carolina law for a single evening of bingo. But don't mind that: tribal sovereignty places bingo outside the scope of state regulations. And there aren't any federal regulations on bingo.

Put it all together and it's clear that of all the bingo played in the U.S. — including on other Indian reservations — "this is our biggest," as one player, who came all the way from Tampa, Fla., told The Mountaineer. That point will be driven home July 2 when the Cherokee sponsor a \$1 million session featuring a \$200,000 grand prize.

Mrs. Finney doubts she'll attend that game, which costs \$50 to play. But she'll test her luck in the regular games. "I'll give it four or five times, and then I won't play any more if I don't win."

Cherokee bingo is played in a 32,000-square-foot hall on US 19 that holds up to 4,500 players. Promoters say that by June they may be holding

sessions five days a week.

While they don't deny they're in it for a profit, the promoters say bingo was brought on the reservation primarily to help revive a comatose economy.

With an average unemployment rate of 40 percent, the reservation's economy dwells in the doldrums in all but the summer and fall tourism seasons. And even then the rate rarely drops below 25 percent.

"It gets to a point where you say 'Why in hell doesn't the tribe do something for its people?'" says Dan McCoy, a tribal council member and one of the business people involved in the bingo

deal.

"I approached the tribe from the angle of doing something for the economy and in the meantime making some money with the management contract."

Preliminary indications are that the tribal economy is, in fact, coming out a winner. Bingo is employing more than 200 people, mostly Cherokee, at \$5 to \$7 per hour all day twice a month. And service industry hiring has also picked up on the reservation of about 5,000 Cherokee.

"The amount of general assistance has been reduced by five to 10 percent," said Jeff

(Continued on Page 6)



MARCELLA KINDER holds \$1,750 in Bingo winnings.



LARRY SOAP is one of a few Cherokee who play