LOCAL

Film evokes standing ovation at R2R fest

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festival kicked off Wednesday night, July 18, at the Joy Performance Center with a standing ovation after the viewing of the profound, heart- ocean for the first time. wrenching and soul-clenching documentary "Darius Goes West: The Roll of his Life."

Smalley, this was not an attempt to break into or make it big in the film industry - this was personal. This journey - a mission. Darius Weems, soon to be a senior at disheartened, they headed back Clark Central High in Athens, across the states. But they soon GA, suffers from a terminal ill- realized the greatest meaning of ness, Duchennes Muscular their journey was not a "tricked-Dystrophy. Up until this time out" wheelchair - it was the jourtwo years ago, he had never traveled outside of his hometown.

Smalley said that he met with disabilities. "I remember Darius would follow his older brother Mario around like a DMD...in 2000," he said.

of Weems' end approaching, think we succeeded, and some-Smalley and 11 others, including where along the way, it became Weems, embarked on an incredithe trip of a lifetime for all of us." ble journey. They went west. In a road trip across the nation, the tary," Smalley said. "I actually crew spread awareness of DMD. did not set out to be a filmmaker They tested the wheelchair and don't really consider myself

cessibility of the outside world. Amidst warm hugs, they found This year's Real-to-Reel film the support of actor William H. Macy and his wife, actress Felicity Huffman, who plays "Lynette" on Housewives. Weems played in the

Another goal of their mission and possibly even a cure." was to convince MTV's show "Pimp my Ride" to doll up his For writer and director Logan electric wheelchair that completely broke down during their journey. When they got to Los Angeles, CA, MTV refused to pimp his ride. Disappointed and ney. Before they all made it back home to Athens, they dropped by East Coast Customs in Darius about 10 years ago while Atlanta. We look out for our volunteering at Project REACH, own, said the owner as he prea summer camp for children sented Weems with the fancy wheels he had dreamed of.

"This wasn't a trip about us. There were 11 second fiddles to shadow. Mario lost his battle to our star," Dylan Wilson said. "Our mission was to make this Witnessing the daunting threat the trip of a lifetime for Darius. I

"This is my first documen-

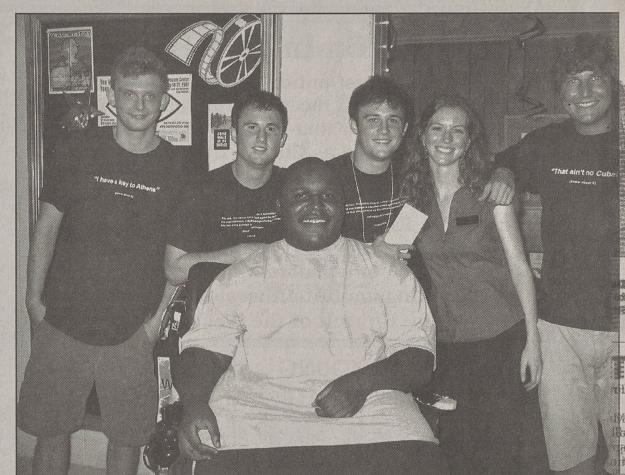
accessibility and, at times, inac- one." He graduated from UGA in May 2006 with a degree in Special Education.

The documentary also introduces two other families affected by DMD and an "in-depth inter-Desperate view with a medical expert discussing promising new research that offers hope for treatment

According to the website, "By raising awareness of DMD, Darius Goes West also hopes to raise money, and any profits from our film will be funneled directly into DMD research (for a cure)."

Smalley, Weems and three other crew members were present for the viewing Wednesday night and came to the front of the stage for a O&A session after the film. They were greeted with a standing ovation. Smalley said that a cure may be just around the corner. They are already in the human trial phase of some medication, he added. Weems said that although a cure will probably not be available for him in his lifetime, he wants others to have a better chance.

"Darius Goes West" received a check for \$250, awarded for having the Best Amateur Documentary. Other awards from the film festival, were given to: "My Name is Wallace" -\$1,000 for Best in Show, "Simple Things" - \$300 for Audience Choice, "Off the Grid: Life on the



Members from the "Darius Goes West" documentary film crew attended the opening night of the Real to-Reel festival for the viewing of their film. Their documentary was awarded a standing ovation by the audience, a Best Amateur Documentary award and \$250. Star of the show, Darius Weems sits in front. Back row, left to right: Crew members Sam Johnson, Ben Smalley, writer and director Logar Smalley, Violet Arth of the Arts Council, and John Hadden.

Professional

Documentary, Animation, "Warlord" - \$500 for Phone Booth" - \$500 for Best "Raccoon and Crawfish" - \$500 Best Professional Short, "The Professional Feature. for Best Professional Animation, Little Gorilla" - \$250 for Best

\$500 for Best "Fission" - \$250 for Best Amateur Amateur Short, and "Mojave

(191)

By Kenneth Kitzmiller

Total precipitation Maximum 1 day Year to date Low temperature High temperature Avg. temperature

Year Ago July 18-24 1.55 3.33 1.52 21.45 20.82 64 (22nd) 70 (20th, 22nd) 94 (19th) 95 (19th) 77.6

HERALD DEADLINES

The Herald welcomes your news for publication in each Thursday's paper. We ask that you observe the following deadlines:

Deadlines for regular news and sports is 5 p.m. Tuesday. In cases of meetings and other activities held on Tuesday night, information will be received until 8 a.m. Wednesday.

Deadline for Lifestyles items is 12 noon Monday. Lifestyles items include weddings, engagements, anniversaries, birthdays, club news, church news and community news.

When holidays or other reasons make it necessary for the paper to publish a day early the deadline is Friday at 12 noon.

There is a \$10 fee for birthdays for ages 0-5. Forms, which must be signed by the parents, are available at the receptionist's desk. Regular advertising rates apply for birthday articles for persons ages 6 and above.

There is a \$20 fee for weddings, anniversaries and engagements. Wedding forms are also available at the receptionist's desk. Only

the information requested on the form will be published. Persons requesting additional information in wedding write-ups must pay regular advertising rates. It is the bride's responsibility - not the Herald's - to obtain permission to publish copyrighted pictures.

Information and articles may be mailed to The Herald, P.O. Box 769, Kings Mountain NC 28086, brought by the office at 824-1 East King Street, sent by fax to 739-0611 or e-mail to gstewart@kingsmountainherald.com







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