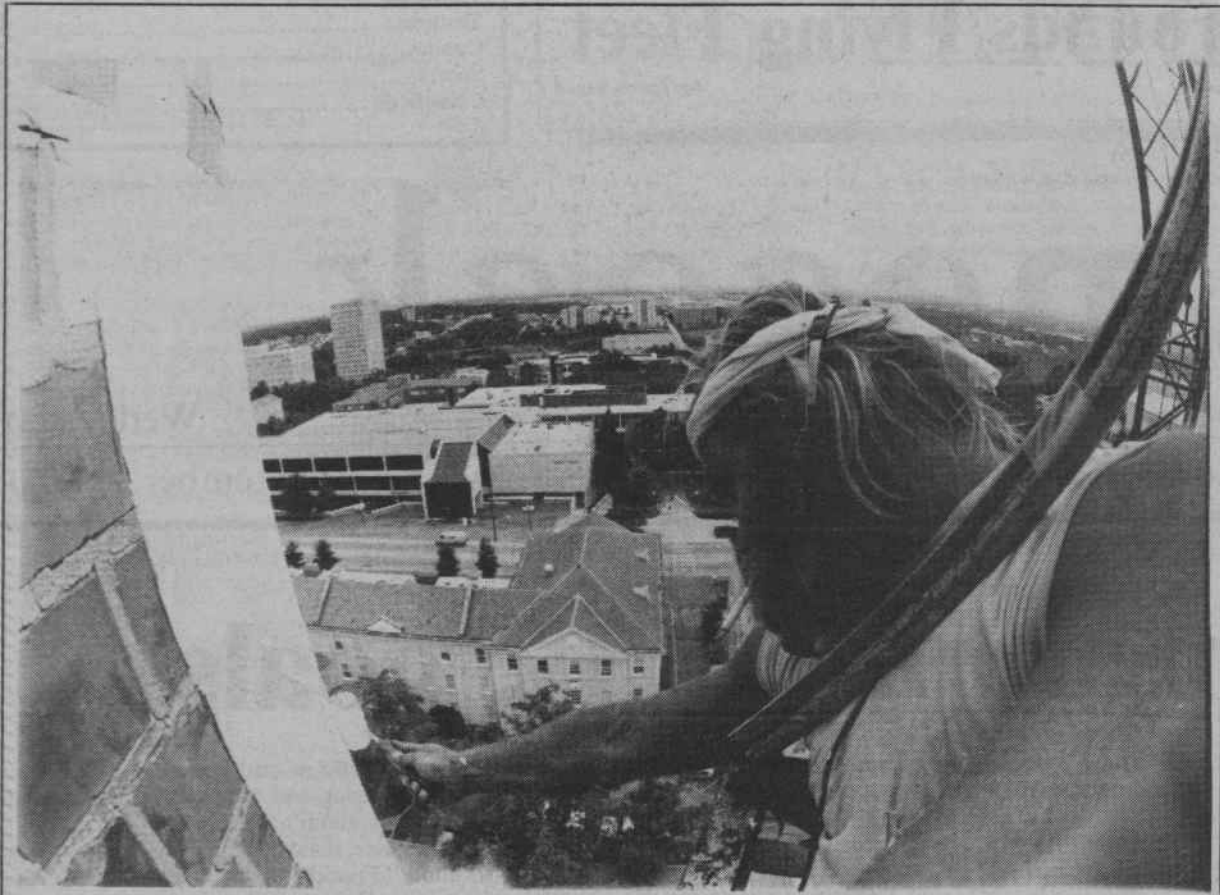




On a clear day. . .
This is another view of the painter who spent Friday high above the campus repainting the smokestack.

JOHN MILLS III/The Gamecock

Honors program attracts S.C.'s brightest students

By JENNIFER GRONDIN
Staff writer

Harvard, Emory, Duke and other prestigious universities lost out this year when three top Brookland Cayce High School graduates came to USC instead.

All three freshmen — Matthew Ferrante, Shahin Vafai and Tripp Masters — received \$20,000 Carolina Scholars Awards, but each had a different reason for selecting USC.

Finance freshman Ferrante applied only to USC. After visiting Harvard, Duke, Boston University, Princeton and Stanford, he decided he did not like what he called the schools' up-tight atmospheres. When he saw a *New York Times* editorial that quoted Edward Fiske's *Selective Guide to Colleges* and compared the honors college's standards to those of the Ivy League schools, he decided USC was the school for him.

Vafai, a freshman in mechanical engineering, was accepted to both Duke and Emory, but he said he chose USC because of the quality of

education at the honors college and because of the location.

"Staying in South Carolina was somewhat important to me," said Vafai. "The state has a really good future. If I can, I want to contribute something to it."

Premed freshman Masters decided to attend USC even though he earned a National Merit Scholarship to Harvard. He said the fact that 100 percent of USC's honors college premed graduates have been accepted into graduate school helped influence his decision.

Honors college director William Mould attributed the track record to three things: the quality of honors college premed graduates, the quality of education offered by the honors college and the quality of counseling students receive.

The majority of USC's honors premed graduates attend the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston or USC School of Medicine in Columbia.

USC's biggest competitors for top students such as these honors college freshmen are the University of North Carolina, Duke University, Furman University, Clemson University, the University of Virginia and Georgia Tech, according to a list of the schools to which last year's honors college freshman applied.

More top students have been attracted to USC since the honors college admitted its first freshman class in 1978. According to 1985-1987 statistics compiled by Mould, the honors college's average SAT score of 1,264 ranked 25 out of 1,450 U.S. institutions of higher education, with respect to the total SAT scores of entering freshman.

This puts the honors college in the top 1.6 percent, ranking just above Cornell University at 1,263; West Point at 1,241; Davidson College at 1,220; Georgia Tech at 1,189; and UNC at 1,187.

USC has also increased its number of National Merit Scholars by adding 20 new freshman this fall, raising the total to 72.

Shooting Continued from page 1

hope that they'll catch them," Neel said. "They just don't have that much to go on."

Although he had not heard about the incident, Assistant Vice President Danny Baker said the shooting should warn students to use caution when they are walking alone anywhere on campus or in the area around Five Points.

"It is a tragedy that something like that happens because someone is walking down the street, but it happens," Baker said. "What I advise people to do is use good common sense to minimize the opportunities for a crime to take place."

The incident is the second crime in the past two weeks that has involved students walking home from the Five Points area.

A USC student was sexually assaulted Wednesday near Christopher Towers on Devine Street. The 18-year-old freshman had just left the Five Points area bar, Pugs.

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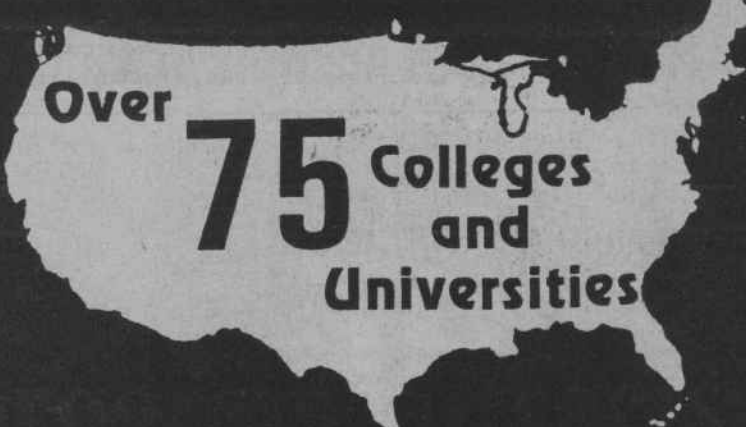
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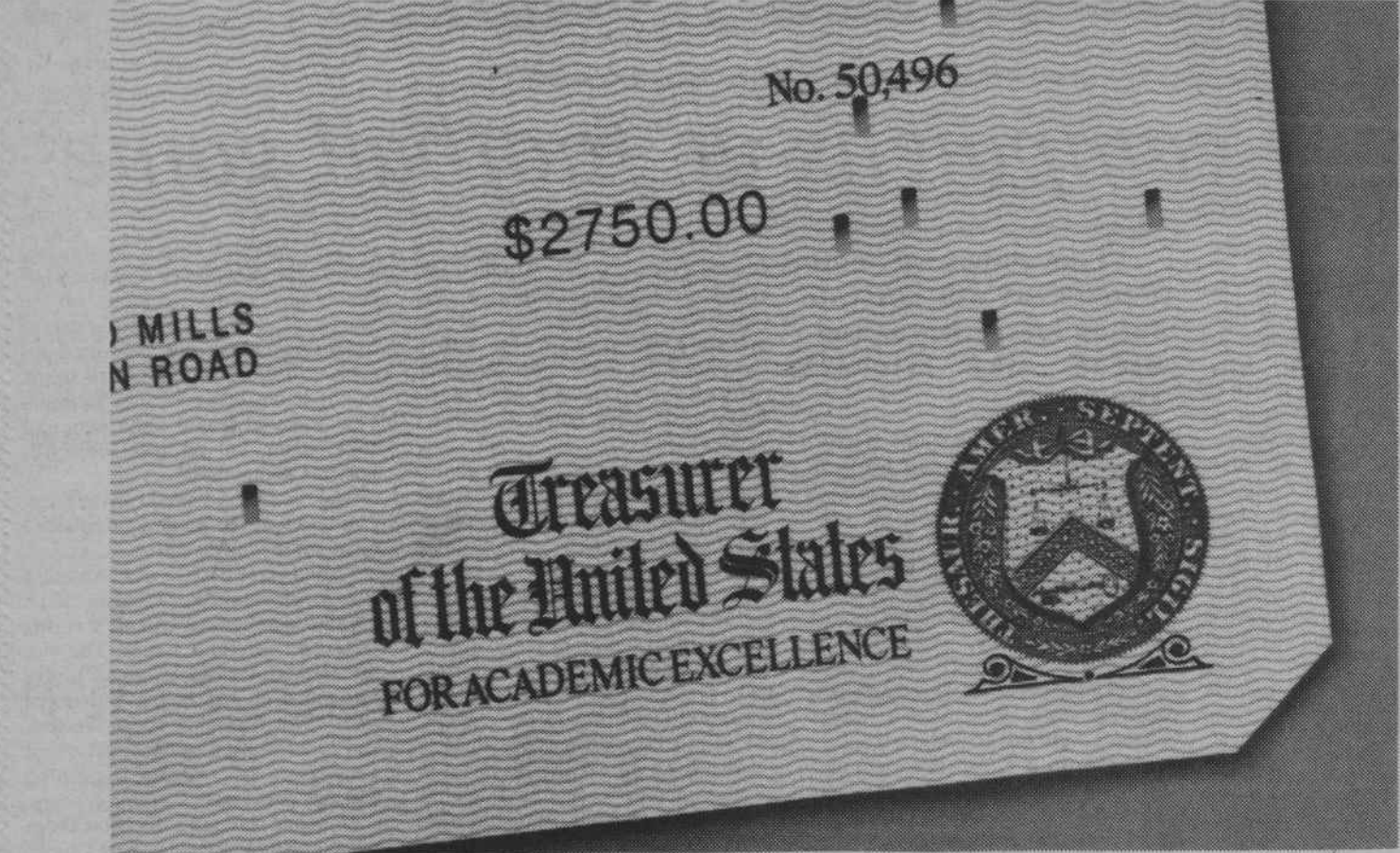
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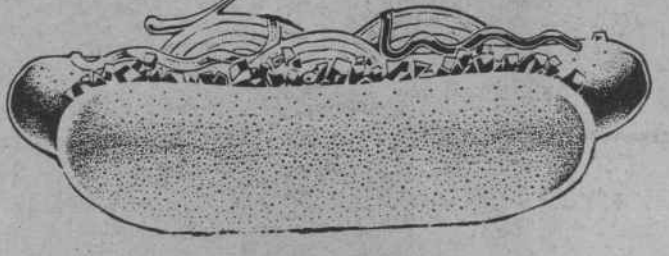
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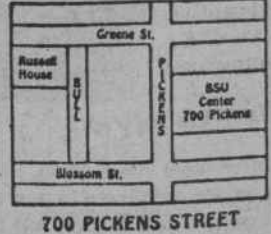


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