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College mourns influential alumnus

BY SUMMERLEE WALTER
Editor-in-Chief

We all recognize the name John Montgomery Belk. It graces the doors leading into the arena where we watch our basketball, volleyball and wrestling teams compete, and it belongs to the scholarship that he endowed. Few of us, though, know much about the man John Belk '43, who died on Aug. 17.

During his time at Davidson, Belk started four years on the varsity basketball team and served as a team captain. He earned the nickname "Long John" and helped the team to its first ever Southern Conference tournament win against NC State in 1943. Belk also took an active role in student government and the Panhellenic Council and was a member of the Eumenean Literary Society and Scabbard and Blade.

The economics degree with which he graduated served Belk well when he returned to the family business – Belk department stores, founded by his father William Henry Belk – in 1952 after spending three years as a lieutenant in the U.S. Army Infantry during World War II and serving as an officer of the United Nations Civil Assistance Commission.

As Chairman of the Board, he grew Belk department stores into one of the nation's largest, most profitable retail outlets.

In addition to chairing a prominent business, Belk served his community as mayor of Charlotte for four terms from 1969 until 1977. During his tenure, Belk expanded the Charlotte/Douglas International Airport into the hub for what is now USAirways and played a key role in bringing pro-

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John Belk was the epitome of a leader as a student, businessperson and civic figure.

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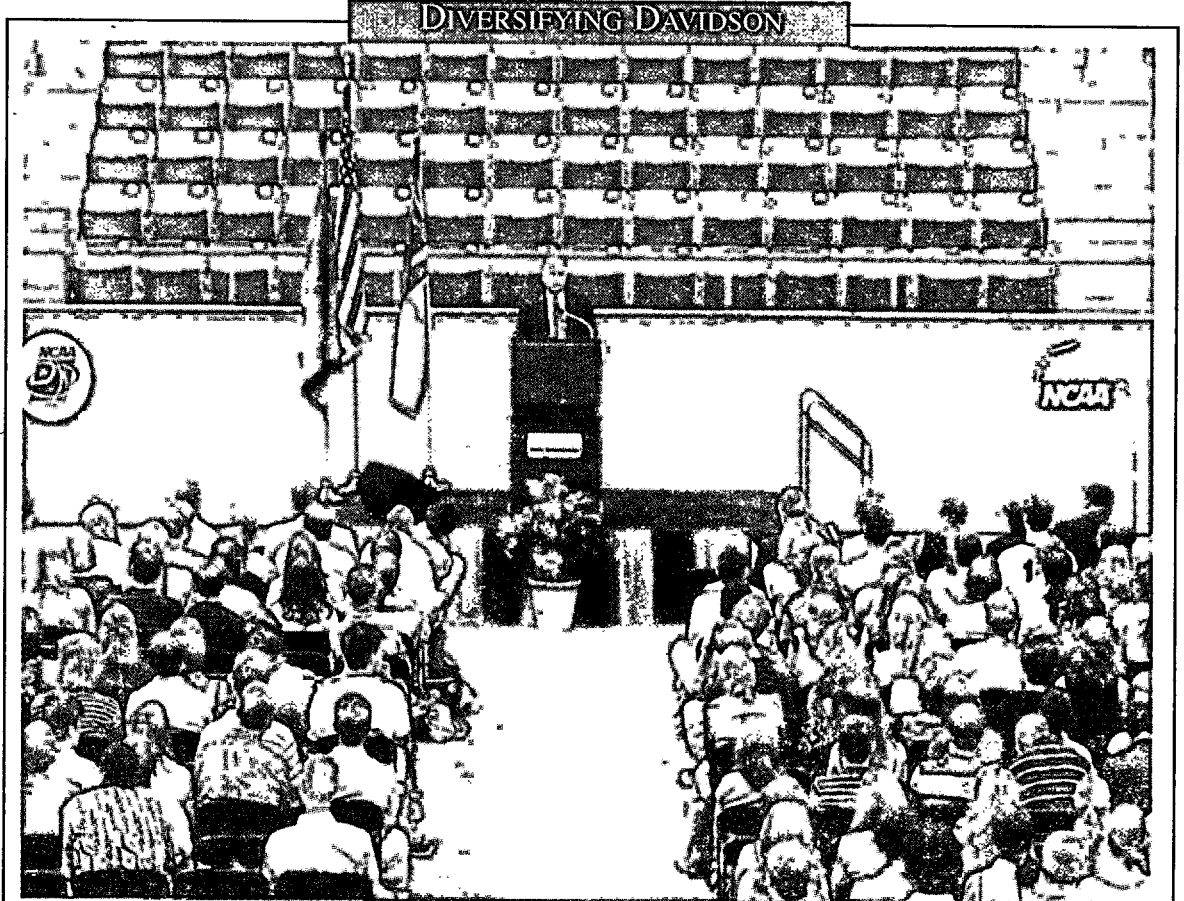
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New president Tom Ross addressed the need for continuing dialogue concerning diversity at this year's Opening Convocation.

Opening Convocation tackles diversity in students and faculty

MONICA JAMOUNEAU
News Editor

Last night, speakers at the 2007 Student Convocation unified two issues that have been increasingly at the forefront of minds at Davidson College: how our new president Tom Ross '72 will serve the college, and how the college will respond to the need for greater diversity on campus.

Convocation, which took place in Belk Arena to an audience of over 500 people, was Ross' first opportunity to speak to the student body.

Before Convocation, Ross said that he was eager to speak to the students.

He had previously given a speech during freshman orientation.

"I've made hundreds of speeches—thousands," he said, but when it came time to speak to the new students, he "felt so much responsibility to do it right."

At Convocation, Ross displayed his dexterity at the podium, asking his students to examine themselves and their commitment to promoting diversity of ideas and people,

not only at Davidson but in all of their experiences.

"I've lived a career of law, judiciary and philanthropy," he said of his non-traditional path to the president's position. "The question I ask you is can this community we call Davidson be strong and caring and even more wonderful than it is?"

Ross thinks that it can.

Vice President for Student Life and Dean of Students Tom Shandley, who introduced Ross, believes that the new president has

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An afternoon with Mrs. Ross

BY WILLIAM CANFIELD HUDSON AND
MONICA JAMOUNEAU
Senior Staff Writer and News Co-Editor

When nations get presidents, they also get first ladies. The same thing happens at college campuses, but too often we focus all our attention on the person in power rather than the woman that stands next to him.

In this interview, one Davidsonian reporter attempts to find the true Susan Ross, not just as the wife of our new president Tom Ross, but also as an important and influential member of the Davidson community.

The Davidsonian: If you could take any course at Davidson, what
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President Ross and his wife, Susan, are settling into life at Davidson.