

Instructor Relates Nigerian Experiences

By Anna Wilson
Feature Editor

Imagine having no paper to take lecture notes, no textbook, and no electricity (therefore no lights or air conditioning).

Dwight Mullen, new political science instructor at the University of North Carolina Asheville, needed no imagination.

These conditions were reality during Mullen's two and one-half years' stay in Nigeria. He taught local government officials at the Ahmadu Bello University.

"I was one of the lucky ones, though," said Mullen. "I had a friend that brought me all the paper I could use."

"It was a starve or feast situation," he said. "The paper manufacturers would go on strike and we'd starve for paper. Then they would go back to work, and we'd have a glut."

Paper wasn't the only thing on Mullen's mind. The lights also went off at unexpected times. "This meant the fans would also go off and in 120 degrees. It makes life rough," he said.

"I still find myself hurrying to get all my reading done before the

sun goes down," he laughed.

According to Mullen, Asheville and Nigeria are on opposite ends of the spectrum.

"The campus at the university in Nigeria was a huge complex. You could drive, say, from UNCA to the Asheville Mall and still be inside the university compound there," said Mullen.

The students live in dorms but there is always a scramble for housing. The university provides housing for the faculty before it will consider dorms for the students.

As an illustration, Mullen tells of renting out his kitchen to two students.

"To understand this, you have to know that the kitchen was separate from the rest of the house," said Mullen.

"The two people shared a room about as big as my office," he said. "And that was luxury compared to what other students had; but they were nice and they helped get the monkey out of the tree."

The monkey?

"We had a baby monkey for a pet and since it was so young it could climb up the tree but couldn't climb down and

they were always having to get it out," explained Mullen.

Another difference between Asheville and Nigeria is hospital care.

"My third child was born in Nigeria," said Mullen. "You just did not go to the hospital; you went to a clinic. My wife had the baby around 1 p.m. and she was home by 5 p.m."

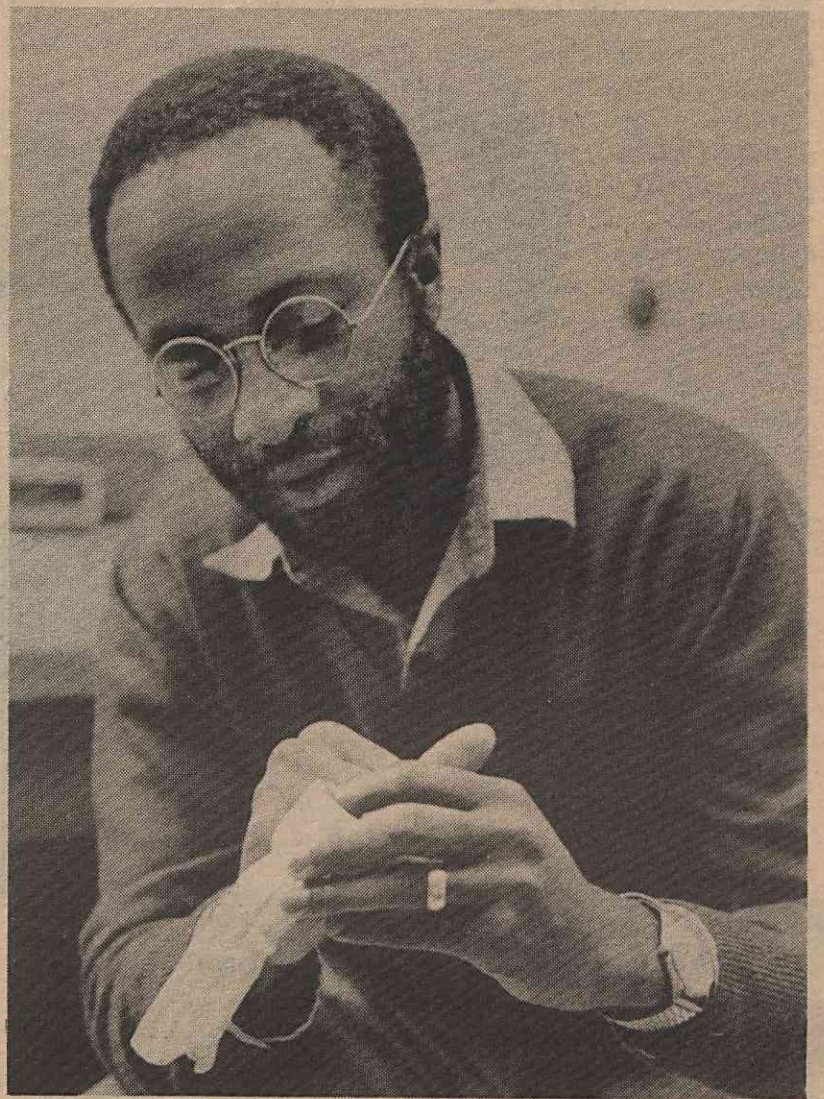
Mullen said that Nigerians are not comfort and convenience oriented like Americans. "I overheard some Americans complaining about not having a full bath. But I was just happy to have hot water."

"I'm still having a tough time adjusting to living in the U.S. But my wife and kids and I really like Asheville," he said.

Since leaving Nigeria Mullen has been in the U.S. for a year. He lived in San Francisco before moving to Asheville.

"Everything is so green here compared to San Francisco. There you have to go to the park to see any grass," he said.

"In fact," laughed Mullen, "my kids are picking weeds in the yard! They see a clover or dandelion and they



Staff Photo by Sylvia Hawkins

Political Science Instructor Dwight Mullen handles a cow bone figurine from Nigeria. Natives sometimes sell the unsuspecting tourist, bone for ivory.

take it the neighbors as a gift."

Mullen is very enthusiastic about his stay in Nigeria. "I could talk forever about my experiences in Nigeria. Some good and some bad."

UNCA political science students will get hands-on experience in African politics next year when Mullen begins teaching a class on African government.

Nigeria's loss is UNCA's gain.

Activities Set for River Week

By Anna Wilson
Feature Editor

Smokey the Bear and Woodsy Owl are coming to Asheville as part of the 8th Annual French Broad River Week (September 8-16).

Activities vary from river safety seminars, to hiking and canoeing, to downriver races and fishing.

For example, people



who are not familiar with the river can take advantage of seminars offered in river safety. These seminars begin Sept. 8-14 at several sights around Buncombe County. For more information call Buncombe County Parks and Recreation Department.

On Sept. 8 at 10 a.m., come and enjoy the outdoors on a short, but strenuous, hike into the wild gorge of the North Fork of the French Broad River. Bring a swimsuit and river shoes.

The group will meet at 10 a.m. at the Pisgah Fish Camp near Brevard.

Starting Sept. 8, fishing enthusiast can

win cash prizes for the heaviest fish caught in three categories: muskie, bass, and trout.

To enter, bring any fish caught during the week to Bonomo Joe's Great Outdoors at 217 Rosman Highway by 5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 16.

For those into rafting, half-price white-water raft trips on Sept. 8-14 is an offer to consider. This is a guided trip, with lunch, through Class III and IV rapids. The cost is \$13 for adults and \$10 for children.

Call Carolina Wilderness Adventures for more information.

Explore plant life along the river trail on an easy, free nature walk led by UNCA botan-

ist Dr. Jim Perry on Sept. 14 at 9:30 a.m.

This group will meet at Sandy Bottoms River Park on Highway 191.

On Sept. 16, race a canoe or kayak down the five-mile river course from Glenn Bridge to Sandy Bottom River Park.

Participants should meet at Glenn Bridge at 9 a.m.

A 10 to 12 gate slalom race on class I+ water will also be set up on Sept. 16 for canoes and kayaks. There is a \$5 entry fee for both races and trophies will be awarded.

The French Broad Riverfest is the culmination of the week's events. From noon to 7 p.m., celebrate River Week at the Asheville

Firefighters Camp on Clayton Road. Top local bands, food, arts and crafts, Smokey the Bear and Woodsy Owl, horseshoes, and volleyball are some of the events.

French Broad River Week is sponsored by the Land-of-Sky Regional Council and the French Broad River Foundation. The purpose of the event is to increase public awareness of the value of the river and of the need to enhance its cleanliness and beauty and to protect it from pollution.

For more information on River Week or the French Broad River Foundation, call Bill Eaker, Land-of-Sky Regional Council.