

The Blue BANNER

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UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE

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Stolen ATM card used at Highsmith

Kenneth Corn
Staff Writer

On March 10, a student from UNCA allegedly stole an ATM card from another student and used it to make an unauthorized withdrawal from the teller machine located in front of the Highsmith Center, according to a UNCA incident report.

On March 20, Marion Kuehn reported to the public safety office that someone had stolen her card and used it to get money.

According to the incident report filed by Dennis Gregory, investigation/crime prevention officer, the suspect withdrew \$1360 with the stolen card. The location of the crime, the name of the victim, and the amount stolen were the only details Gregory could release at this time.

Gregory did say the only other outside firm involved in the investigation was the State Employee's Credit Union. The credit union owns and operates the teller machine where the unauthorized withdrawal took place.

Kuehn declined an interview, saying that she had made an agreement with the student who used the card not to reveal the student's name.

Gregory said he could not give the name of the suspect because Kuehn decided not to press criminal charges.

"It appears that there has been an agreement worked out between the perpetrator and the victim which is satisfactory to both of them," said Gregory.

"If there are no charges pressed, then the initial report is the only public document we have," said Gregory. "The case will be closed and marked 'prosecution declined,' and that will be as far as the investigation goes."

"I am always glad to see it resolved in this manner," said Gregory. "This way, the student will not be arrested and the incident will not go on a criminal record."

"It is encouraging to know that we have students that can work out very serious problems without any outside intervention," said Gregory.

There will be no disciplinary action taken by the public safety department since no charges have been pressed, said Gregory. But he said the university has the option of sending the case to student court.

The Public Safety Department usually leaves the decision up to the victim to send the case to student court, said Gregory.

He said Kuehn had not decided whether to take the suspect to court yet, but she was "leaning very much toward taking it."

"Most likely, it will go to student court this summer or early fall," said Gregory. "The great thing about student court is that she (the suspect) will be judged by her peers."

According to federal law, Gregory can not give any details of the investigation until the case goes to court. If the case does appear in court, all records, including the name of the suspect, will be released to the public, said Gregory.

Student court could select a variety of different disciplinary actions. Community service work, counseling, or many other types of reprimands could be decided upon by the court, said Gregory.

Mountain Trace no longer available as university housing

Christine Treadaway
Staff Writer

Because of lease problems and student complaints, UNCA has decided not to renew the Mountain Trace apartment complex as university housing. As a result, 34 students must find new housing for themselves.

Pete Williams, director of housing, said there were two main reasons why the university chose not to renew their lease with the owners of the complex.

"Last year we (UNCA) opened with approximately 25 vacancies. We origi-

nally had taken Mountain Trace to handle the overflow situation that we had. The second reason is that we were having some difficulty because of the fact that there are two owners. We had 17 of the apartments, but the others were under the jurisdiction of another owner.

There was some conflict between the two owners, in terms of the maintenance of the property. That was the primary reason we didn't wish to continue with the lease agreement," Williams said.

Several residents of the Mountain Trace complex said that they had problems with the maintenance and upkeep of the building and their apartments, as well as disturbances from other non-student tenants living there. Williams said this was another consideration in UNCA's decision.

"We (the university) did not have control or influence over the non-students that were there, or students who were not under the UNCA umbrella (i.e. students who rent from the landlords rather than from UNCA

housing.) We had incidents with pets and some difficulty with trash being left in the hallway. We also had some problems with parties that non-UNCA residents had, in terms of keeping quiet hour," said Williams.

Chris Polhamus, a senior majoring in political science, who had lived in Mountain Trace for almost a year, said he didn't get any official notification until after Spring Break, which changed his and his roommate's plan to remain in their apartment over the

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UNCAMONT provides campus fun



Photo by Michael Taylor

The UNCA school mascot, Rocky the Bulldog, joined in the fun at UNCAMONT on Saturday, April 27. The all-day event featured games, live music, free Pepsi and food, and Punchy the Robot.

Conflict between students and store leads to petition

Susan Sertain
Staff Writer

Two UNCA students are circulating a petition to boycott Black Dome Mountain Sports after a March 9 incident at the Asheville sporting goods store.

"I want UNCA students who read this article to know what happened and be able to make a conscientious decision as to whether or not they will go to this store," said Patricia Parker, a sophomore mass communication major.

"If you go to this store and give them personal information, you could run over the neighbor's cat, walk into this store and be attacked by all the employees," she said.

The petition that is being circulated states, "March 9, 1996, at approximately 4:00 p.m., Charles Ciaffone entered Black Dome Mountain Sports, located at 140 Tunnel Road, Asheville, North Carolina. His purpose for entering the store was to make a payment on a layaway account. Ciaffone was verbally assaulted by Scott Lowrey, an employee of Black Dome Mountain Sports, because Ciaffone had been involved in a minor traffic accident with Lowrey's mother on February 26, 1996. Scott Lowrey was not present at the accident."

"This accident did not involve him or Black Dome Mountain Sports in any way. Trent Thomas, the owner of the store gave his consent for Scott Lowrey to use information Lowrey found in the layaway records of Black Dome Mountain Sports to surprise Ciaffone and verbally assault him in the store. The accusations and insults

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UNCA graduate and Weather Channel personality speaks

Denise Sizemore
Staff Writer

The American Meteorological Society (AMS) held its last meeting on April 24 with special guest speaker, and 1993 UNCA graduate, Kristina Abernathy of The Weather Channel. Abernathy spoke with the audience about how she got into television, and afterwards held a question-and-answer session.

"If anyone is interested in going into TV, the best thing they can do is get an internship," she said. Abernathy said working for a TV station would be the best internship so "you can get that experience in front of a camera," and because "you have to have a resume tape to get the job."

"Sometimes, if the studio was open and they had finished with the news, I would go in there and practice," she said. She said she made a tape during her internship and after graduation sent them out all over the Southeast. "I was really lucky because six weeks after graduation, I had a job," said Abernathy.

After being in Albany for a year, she said she sent out a tape to The Weather Channel. However, at that time they had no openings.

"About six months later, I got a call and all of a sudden they had an opening," Abernathy said. She has been at The Weather Channel since July 1995, and said it is "a pretty good place to work."

She also told the audience that "your first job (in TV) is going to be in a really small market." In the TV market, New York is number one and Albany, Georgia, is number 154, according to Abernathy. She said she did no forecasting in Albany because she had nothing to forecast with.

"They didn't want to spend the money on it (forecasting)," she said. "They were never going to spend the money on the equipment needed, so it was basically just a rip and read."

A "rip and read" is where they "rip" the National Weather Service report off and read it, according to Abernathy. She said because of this, she had gotten out of the practice of forecasting.

"Even at The Weather Channel, the on-air people don't do the forecasting," said Abernathy. "We have more behind the scenes meteorologists than we do in front of the camera."

"They (people behind the scenes) do all of the forecasting, which is kind of unfair because they do all the hard work and don't get any of the recognition for it," said Abernathy. "Everyday, before we go on the air, they brief us about what is going on."

She said a lot of people who are just out of college are hired at The Weather Channel to work behind the scenes.

Abernathy said it was a little nerve-racking to go from local television to a national audience. "We're seen all over the country," she said. "I came from

south Georgia where maybe 50,000 people were watching." The Weather Channel has over a million viewers during a big weather event, according to Abernathy.

Abernathy said her job at The Weather Channel was "hard to get used to knowing that there were that many people watching." She also said she had to get used to talking about the entire country's, as well as European and Australian, weather. "I had to do some real brushing up on my meteorology and geography skills," she said.

Abernathy said she has not covered any major storms while at The Weather Channel and "I personally don't want to." She said the seasoned veterans are usually the ones who go out in the field.

"Sometimes it is a real big competition to see who goes and sometimes they're having to pull teeth to get somebody to go, depending on what it is," she said.

She said the philosophy at The Weather Channel is, "the weather is the focus, not the person. We're all sort of interchangeable and expendable, in a way, so there is not a lot of room for competition."

Abernathy said The Weather Channel is a good environment to work in, and provides good exposure for future jobs. "A lot of really smart and sharp

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