

# The Banner

## Four ounces of marijuana seized from resident

By Amelia Morrison  
Staff Writer

UNCA Public Safety officers seized four ounces of marijuana and drug paraphernalia during a search of a student's room in Founders Hall on March 13, the Friday before spring break.

The marijuana belonged to Sophomore Alexander Moran, a resident assistant, who consented to the search and signed a waiver. "The marijuana was in sandwich bags, and is probably worth about \$500," said Dennis Gregory, director of public safety.

"At this point no charges have been filed [by the Buncombe County district attorney.] They are pending until the end of the investigation," said Gregory. "We expect to find at least one or two more people that may be involved."

Public Safety Investigator Jerry Adams said that the investigation is focusing on finding out who Moran got the marijuana from.

Gregory said that potential charges include two felonies: possession of four ounces of marijuana, and one count of sale and delivery.

Moran may also face the misdemeanor charge possession of drug paraphernalia.

Possession of 1.5 ounces or less of marijuana qualifies a misdemeanor. Any amount beyond that can be considered a felony.

"A felony is punishable by up to five years in prison and a fine," said Adams.

At the close of the investigation, the district attorney will decide what charges, if any, will be pressed.

"We'll send a completed report to the District Attorney who will review the report and press the charges he is most comfortable with from this investigation," said Gregory.

"After the submission of the report to the district attorney, there are usually about two to three weeks before a first appear-

ance, and then about two to three months until the official court trial, depending on the request," said Adams.

Although UNCA will not decide which charges to press, Gregory said that he does not want the university's role in the investigation to end.

"We are not only here to enforce the law, but we certainly want to extend help, some kind of drug abuse counseling, to the extent of what these people will accept," said Gregory. "We are always concerned for a student who possesses or could be using drugs."

According to Gregory, the confiscation of marijuana on the UNCA campus is not

unusual. "We know that we have marijuana on campus, and we generally make from four to six arrests a year, depending on the student body," said Gregory. "It is certainly not uncommon, but the quantity [in this case] surprised me."

According to the police report, Moran placed a bag containing approximately one ounce of marijuana in the front of his pants during the search and asked to go to the bathroom. The bag was removed from his pants.

Gregory said that the investigation should be complete in about one week. Moran did not respond to phone calls made by *The Banner* yesterday for comment.

## Big Mac attack

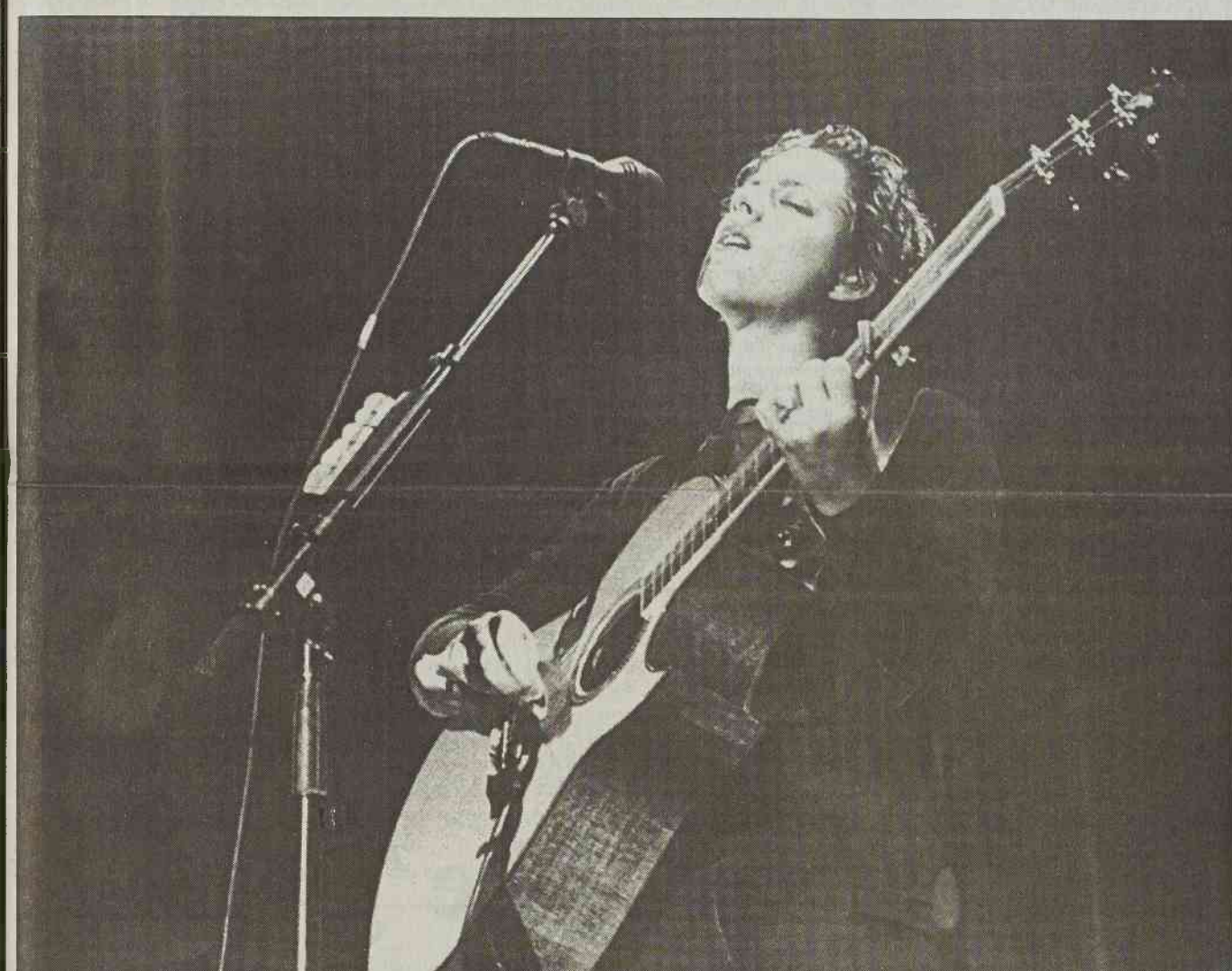


PHOTO BY PRESTON GANNAWAY

Grammy-award winning musician Sarah McLachlan performed at the Asheville Civic Center on March 24. UNCA students and faculty attended the show to hear her hit songs "Building a Mystery," "Sweet Surrender," and "Possession." See a review of the concert on page 4. Additional photos of the concert are posted on The Banner Online.

## New SGA officers elected for 1998-99

By Gene Zaleski  
Staff Writer

The UNCA Student Government Association (SGA) announced the results of its elections for 1998-99 officers on Mar. 13. The only contested races were for SGA president and vice-president. All candidates for SGA senate positions ran unopposed.

Junior Alphonso Donaldson Jr., who served as a junior senator in the 1997-98 SGA, was elected SGA president. Donaldson received 63 percent of all votes cast, opponent Claudia Perez-Hurtado received 37 percent.



Alphonso Donaldson

Sophomore Eric Winters, who was a sophomore senator in 1997-98 SGA, defeated Junior Jay "Mole" Johnson in the race for SGA vice-president. Winters received 55 percent of votes cast, Johnson received 45 percent.

Over 350 students eligible to vote cast ballots in the SGA elections held on March 11-12.

Winters said he was disappointed by the low voter turnout.

"We had between 300 and 400 people vote out of 3,200 students," said Winters. "That kind of bothers me because I like to be a student representative, and now I am only

representing the students who voted."

Donaldson and Winters said that the new administration will focus on involving a greater percentage of UNCA community in SGA operations by setting up task forces for to address the needs of different segments of the UNCA student population.

"We are setting up a freshman, residential, and commuter task force, which would help address the needs of these groups," said Donaldson. "Amid all the hustle and bustle of business these types of things fall by the wayside sometimes."

"I want to open up the SGA to make it more inclusive to the rest of the campus," said Donaldson. "I would love to get more people involved in SGA."

Donaldson said that the new administration will give more attention to the needs of commuter students, and try to involve commuters more closely in university affairs.

"What we are doing as a university on the whole is catering to the traditional residential student," Donaldson said. "There is a whole demographic group out there which we are missing."

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## UNCA faculty rate high in student survey

By Amelia Morrison  
Staff Writer

A survey conducted by The University of North Carolina General Administration to assess the undergraduate experience of all students in the UNC system showed that UNCA sophomores were satisfied with the university's faculty, but were unsatisfied with campus safety, orientation, and registration procedures.

The survey was administered to sophomores system-wide in the spring of 1997. UNCA sophomores said that university faculty interact well with students in and out of the classroom, set high expectations for students to learn, and encourage students to be actively involved learners. UNCA ranked above UNC-Chapel Hill and most other system schools in questions related to faculty performance.

Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs James Pitts said he was not surprised that the UNCA faculty was rated favorably by UNCA students.

"We are dedicated to providing a challenging education for serious students," said Pitts. "We staff our courses with quality instructors. In ratios of students that make students and faculty accountable to each other. We're organized for a very powerful and transforming education on this campus."

"Our faculty are more available than faculty at some other institutions," said Pitts.

The survey indicated that students are satisfied with the current class sizes at UNCA. Pitts said that current plans for university growth will not dramatically increase the average class size at UNCA.

"We plan to grow only modestly. We are one of the larger four-year liberal arts institutions in the nation, therefore we are reluctant to

do unrestrained growth." Pitts also said that the university plans to add more faculty as the student population grows to keep class sizes stable.

**"We are dedicated to providing a challenging education for serious students. We staff our courses with quality instructors."**

**- Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs James Pitts**

UNCA rated poorly on questions of perceived campus safety. Over 95 percent of UNCA sophomores who participated in the study indicated that they do not feel that the university has taken sufficient steps to ensure physical safety.

UNCA ranked 13 out of the 16 state schools on the question of safety, falling behind larger campuses like UNC-Chapel Hill, North Carolina State University, Appalachian State University, and Western Carolina University.

"The lighting is bad," said Kirsten Byrd, a sophomore psychology major. "You can not walk across campus alone at night. Nobody would hear you if you screamed." Director of Public Safety Dennis Gregory said that despite the student perceptions, UNCA is overall a safe campus.

"Our statistics do not at all reflect an unsafe campus," said Dennis Gregory, director of Public Safety. "But it is a true fear, and we need to take steps to make our students feel safer."

A study based on U.S. Department of Justice crime statistics released last month ranked UNCA as the safest college campus in the state, and one of the 70 safest in the nation.

"We are a very safe campus, ranking number one in North Carolina for safety on campus, but we're not doing a good job of interacting with students," said Gregory.

Gregory said that the university is taking steps to combat lighting problems.

"We added lights in the park beside the library, around Belk Theater, and at the rear of South Ridge," said Gregory.

The study also showed that UNCA sopho-

mores were not satisfied with the orientation program, as the student satisfaction rating was 15 out of the 16 system universities. Students were especially dissatisfied with the length of orientation and the registration process.

Assistant Director of Student Development Amy Justice said that the administration is in the process of changing the orientation program.

"We are trying to meet the needs of students that are very busy," said Amy Justice, assistant director of Student Development. "We are cutting out anything unnecessary, the fluff, and putting in quality programs."

At the request of students, Student Development will offer evening programs for part-time students, do away with some placement tests, and help make the registration process easier.

"Registration is going to be different this year because we are going to be online; we're going to do web registration," said Justice.

The lines students have to wait in are

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