



See Lifestyles page 5

The Blue Banner



See Entertainment page 3

Block Party jump starts new year

By Courtney Metz
STAFF WRITER

The Student Government Association hosted the Block Party, a night of food, rides and fun, Friday with hopes of improving student life and providing a safe and fun event on campus.

"I really enjoyed the Block Party," said Whitney Abbott, junior. "The food was great, and it was really cool to play with the therapy dogs. Overall, it was an awesome night."

The event, hosted for the first time by SGA, went through some major changes since last year. Relocated from behind the Health and Fitness Center to the front of the Highsmith University Union, the event featured inflatable games, laser tag, music, a fun slide, food, miniature golf and many other attractions.

"The Block Party last year was OK," said Karen Moriarty, sophomore. "I stayed for about 10 minutes. Then I left to go home and sleep. This year was completely different. The new location made it a lot easier for residents to get to. The food was great. It was a definite improvement on a great event."

Many students felt that the entire event had improved.

"There were a lot more things to do and a more vibrant atmosphere," said Barrett Williams, sophomore. "Altogether, it was a great improvement."

SGA officials said they were very pleased with the outcome of the event.

"I think it went really well," said John Noor, SGA president and Block Party event planner. "We had almost 1,000 people turn out, and from what I heard, people really enjoyed it. I think starting out the year right will start a great rest of the year for us."

Using contributions from different campus departments and organizations, SGA was able to put together \$16,000 for the event.

The event was a great way to get involved in student life, according to Noor. Additionally, he said he hopes the Block Party and similar events will help to enrich student life and allow students to have a more enjoyable time while they are here.

"Everyone that leaves here leaves because student life sucks," Noor said. "It's not because the academics suck."

Improving the student life will improve the overall quality of the institution as well, according to Executive of External Affairs for SGA Rob Waskom.

"Historically, we have had a reputation of being a suitcase or commuter campus," Waskom said. "But, to increase our commitment to student life, we need to recognize that students don't only study here. They live here. We can work to improve the campus environment, and that enhances our academic experience."

SGA is also working to organize several other events for the upcoming academic year, with which they hope to incorporate student input. Among these are a date auction and a lingerie party.

These will hopefully produce the same outcome as the Block Party and improve student life, according to Noor.



CONTRIBUTED BY JONATHAN BARNES

Junior economics student Pierce Johnson plays with three babies at one of the New Life Homes orphanages in Kenya. Students from UNC Asheville chapter of the Student Global AIDS Campaign and others volunteered their time this summer to help children of the area.

Students explore culture

Group travels to Kenya to learn about global HIV/AIDS

By Anna Lee
STAFF WRITER

Students traveled to Kenya this summer to learn about the HIV/AIDS crisis through the Amani Scholars program.

"I feel like I'm going back there at some point soon," said Jonathan Barnes, junior environmental science student. "I feel like if I didn't go back there, I would lose part of myself because it's such an amazing country, and I met so many wonderful people. It really helped to put a face on all

of the statistics."

UNC Asheville students organized and attended a conference with students from Nairobi University, Kenya Medical Training College and Kenya Polytechnic University.

"I don't think there's any other conference on HIV/AIDS entirely organized, implemented and attended to by students," said John Stephens, senior literature student.

The conference gave Kenyans and Americans the chance to

express their feelings about development policies, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, according to Barnes.

"Pierce (Johnson) had said that after this hour-long session on international politics, which he moderated, he learned more in that one hour than he did in one semester, because you have so many diverse perspectives," Barnes said.

Stephens coordinated the conference with the exchange between American and Kenyan

students in mind.

"I think the highlight for a lot of people was interacting with these students from different Kenyan universities," Stephens said. "It's one of those really fulfilling experiences to find a like-minded person, kind of a soulmate on another continent or someone who you really connect with on a really personal and genuine level."

Students spent much of their time in Kenya volunteering at

SEE KENYA, PAGE 2

Goombay Festival draws a diverse crowd

By Brenda Weigel
STAFF WRITER

Asheville came alive with the sound of steel drums, exotic dances and brightly colored costumes as part of the Goombay Festival held last weekend.

The festival featured everything from reggae and blues to vendors selling African art, colorful clothing and handmade crafts.

Twenty-four years ago, Jacqueline King, one of the founding members of Friends of the Young Men's Institute Cultural Center, helped bring the Goombay Festival to Asheville.

The first time she attended a Goombay Festival, she never thought of bringing it to Asheville, according to King.

"I had attended a national meeting down in Florida, and for part of the entertainment they had a Goombay Festival," King said. "I really didn't think a lot about it, because it was hot, there were mosquitoes and they were running out of food. It was just okay."

"A few years after that, at one of the (Friends of the YMI) meetings, Gloria Free said to me, 'I know what we can (do), we can have a Goombay,'" King said.

She was not impressed by the other Goombay Festival, but the two decided to organize a better



PENNIE LEAS - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The youngest member of the Community Jazz Band, Miss Jocelyn, plays guitar and sang in many of the songs at the Goombay Festival.

event for Asheville, according to King.

The first festival was organized to raise funds and garner support for the YMI Cultural Center.

People attended the Goombay Festival because it provided a break from everyday forms of entertainment, according to King.

"People respond because of the cultural aspect and the entertainment that's different than what they're used to," King said. "We have stilt walkers, African dancers, reggae-type music and steel drums. We expect the number of people who attend to be in the thousands."

The success of the Asheville Goombay Festival exceeded many expectations because of the diversity of culture, according to Dan Meela, a fourth-year vendor.

"(Goombay) is very cultural," Meela said. "There is a lot of diversity and a lot of different races not usually seen in North Carolina."

Asheville was a good host for the Goombay festival, according to Meela.

"I go to festivals all over the United States," Meela said. "This is my fourth time, and if a festival is not good, I don't go back. Pretty much all the vendors I see here I see every year in the exact same location. People here are very nice and very supportive."

New server replaces Pipeline

By Cally Pelliccia
STAFF WRITER

With the switch to OnePort, the new campus server, the transition back to school for many students and faculty proved difficult, however, the software has the ability to do much more than was possible before.

"The potential is much greater in OnePort, and while we have implemented a very stripped down version, we have the capability to grow OnePort beyond what was possible in Campus Pipeline," said Robin Daugherty, assistant director of information technology.

OnePort includes several services most students will use regularly.

"It is the portal through which students will register for classes, see their grades, view their transcripts and view and pay their bills," Daugherty said. "Faculty will use OnePort to manage their classes, grade students, communicate with students and assist their advisees."

Without factoring in expenses on labor, OnePort cost the school practically nothing.

"The good news is that OnePort is really a software upgrade of Campus Pipeline, and that means that we did not have to buy a new product," Daugherty said.

"We pay annual license maintenance to our software vendor and as a result, when a dramatic new upgrade emerges, we can acquire it without paying for the license. The cost in staff time for implementing is harder to quantify."

Although OnePort is merely an upgrade of the old Pipeline system students admit to having troubles adjusting to the new program.

"The old one was a little easier to operate because everything was on the home page," said Royce Breckon, freshman student. "With OnePort, you have to hunt around for services and features."

Due to late funding and a restricted work period, ITS said they had no other choice.

"In the perfect world, the changeover would have occurred early in the summer. Unfortunately, it could not be finalized until early in the summer, and this pushed the project completion to the beginning of the semester," Daugherty said. "Many on the ITS staff have been working long hours ever since to get the cut-over completed."

The switch to the new software was a necessary change, according to Daugherty.

"Campus Pipeline was the first portal product UNC Asheville used," Daugherty said. "If we had not moved to OnePort, Campus Pipeline would have eventually quit working with the underlying software."

ITS has plans to upgrade the current version of OnePort, leaving many possibilities for the new system to grow.

Future plans for the server include a program where students may determine the required courses remaining in their major, according to Daugherty.

"We hope that UNC Asheville will find benefit by using many of the features of our OnePort," Daugherty said. "The possibilities are all encouraging."

Students said they have not adjusted to the new server.

"It might be a little faster than Pipeline was, but I haven't gotten to use it enough to know if it works better," said chemistry student Robyn Fender.