

People from across the state celebrate sexuality in Asheville

Gay Pridefest



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New corner spot brings big city nightlife to Asheville

Whiskey Tavern



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The Blue Banner

Volume 45, Issue 8

Serving the University of North Carolina at Asheville since 1982

October 19, 2006

Bacteria forces dining hall to trash leafy greens

By Christa Chappelle
STAFF WRITER

A recent national E. coli outbreak in spinach products prompted Chartwell's Dining Services to remove the leafy vegetable from their menus, according to their senior director.

"The story ran, and the first call I made was to my chef," said Danny Dawkins, senior director of dining services. "I told my chef to pull all spinach, spinach-based items and spring mixes that contain spinach."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention sent out a health alert for spinach products on Sept. 16, warning consumers of the outbreak. This excludes processed spinach. The strain of E. coli O157:H7 originated from spinach produced by Natural Selection Foods brands located in San Juan Bautista, Calif., with an expiration date of Oct. 1, 2006, or earlier. Twenty-six states reported E. coli infections as of Oct. 6. North Carolina did not have any reported outbreaks, according to the CDC.

When Dining Services knew about the situation, they discarded all of their spinach. Because they receive prepackaged spinach, this reduces the possibility of cross contamination with other foods, according to Dawkins.

"The spinach we receive goes through a prepackaged form," Dawkins said. "It's just a matter of discarding it. There's no possibility of cross contamination."

There are a range of symptoms of E. coli poisoning, according to Missy Parris, health services staff nurse.

"Usually the symptoms are going to be bloody diarrhea," Parris said. "When you lose a lot of fluids that can be very dangerous, particularly to young children or elderly adults. There's another more serious complication called hemolytic uremic syndrome. Simply put, that causes kidney failure"

However, the chance of dying from E. coli infection decreases among healthy adults, according to Parris.

"A majority of the time, healthy adults can get through their symptoms with very little problems or illnesses that would be life threatening," Parris said. "There's a low chance of (serious side effects) if you're a healthy adult."

SEE SPINACH 3



Asheville sees success in new approach to end homelessness

By Ben Smith
COPY EDITOR

Asheville stands alongside many cities nationwide looking to solve homelessness by first providing housing, rather than continuing to treat the symptoms of the problem. But despite achievements and continued support of the 10-year plan established January 2005, many Ashevilleans will still spend this winter in the cold.

"It's not easy being homeless," said Josh Deliefde, homeless

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It's very hard for people to address their underlying problems while they're living on the streets.

CHARLOTTE CAPLAND
community development director

member of the Asheville Homeless Network. "[My fiancé and I] have been to four different camps since we've been here. The first two we got ran out of by the cops, and the third one our dog got hit and died by the interstate, and we had to leave that place. I couldn't stay there anymore. Now we're in a new site, which hopefully won't get ransacked for too long."

Deliefde and his pregnant fiancé, Valerie Debenedictis, are currently awaiting housing from Asheville's Housing First program. This policy, set up in the 10-year plan, aims to eventually house all chronically homeless individuals, defined in the plan as those who have been homeless for a year or longer or have had four or more episodes of homelessness in three years.

The plan is a radical departure from traditional answers to home-

lessness. Rather than first requiring individuals to seek help for mental problems and alcohol and drug addiction, the Housing First plan provides housing and then treats the individual's other problems. The hope is with a stable place to stay, homeless individuals will be more likely to be treated effectively and reintegrate into society.

"The plan really moves housing from the end of reintroduction of a homeless person back to the beginning," said Charlotte Capland, community development director and coordinator of the 10-year plan. "It is recognizing that people are homeless usually for a multiplicity of reasons. It is very hard for people to address their underlying problems while they are living on the streets or even in emergency shelters."

Similar programs have been met with success throughout many major cities including Chicago, Denver, Atlanta and New York. Currently there are over 200 10-year plans either established or in the planning stages throughout the country, according to the Interagency Council on Homelessness.

"The strength in the program in Asheville is that there's far greater understanding of the dynamics of homelessness," said Gary Jackson, Asheville city manager. "There's a higher level of sympathy

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I've seen a lot of people go pay their rent and then go smoke the rest of it up.

JOSH DELIEFDE
member of homeless network

and empathy for the plight of homeless here than most commu-

nities." The real motivation for initiating the 10-year plan is the economic burden it removes from the government, who pays for homeless individuals, who are more likely to use emergency rooms, spend time in jail for petty crimes and experience health problems such as alcohol and drug addiction and HIV.

By providing the homeless with shelter, tests have shown the government spends less money than by dealing with the consequences of continued homelessness, of

who account for less than 20 percent of all homeless in Asheville, according to Capland.

"The chronically homeless end up using more than half the resources that go into helping homeless people," Capland said. "Because they have multiple issues in their life, including alcohol abuse and mental illness, they end up using a ridiculous quantity of other public resources."

In a study, 37 chronically homeless individuals cost the government an average of \$22,700 each per year in jail, court, hospital,

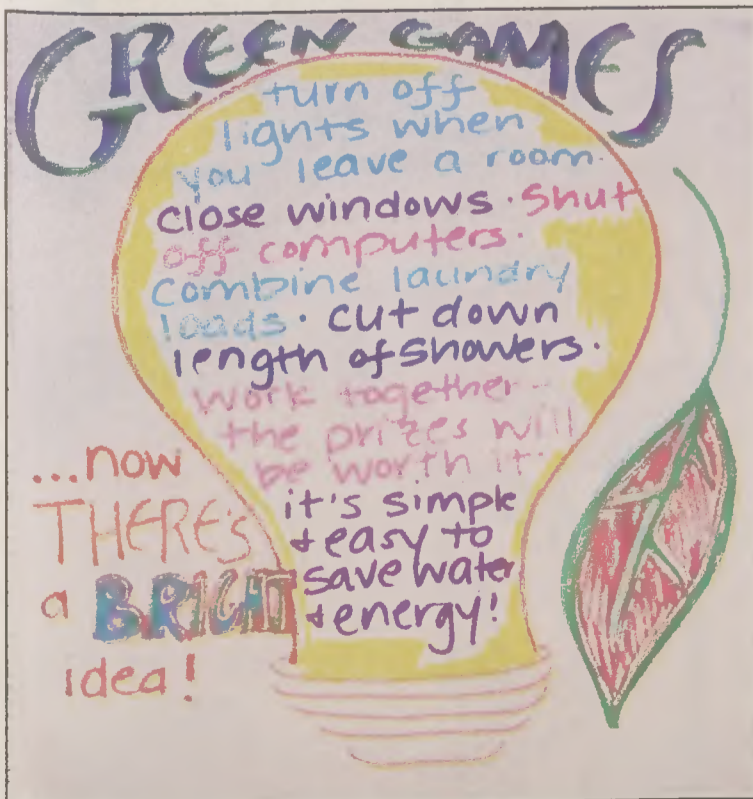
MEGAN WILDMAN - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

EMS and emergency shelter costs. This is compared to the estimated \$16,000 annual cost of housing such individuals, according to the 10-year plan.

Evidence of the success of Asheville's 10-year plan is just emerging.

On Oct. 5 the city opened the Woodfin Apartments, which house 18 chronically homeless individuals with disabilities, including individuals with mental disorders and individuals infected

SEE HOMELESS PAGE 2



ABBY KENT - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Students work together with others in their dorm building to save energy. Many said they hope, while the prizes are appealing, the motivating force behind the Green Games is to save the environment.

Resident students change daily habits to conserve energy and save money

By Anna Lee
STAFF WRITER

Resident halls battle in the Green Games this week to determine which group of students can conserve the most water and energy to win a chocolate fountain party and other prizes.

"Hopefully people aren't just wanting to win the competition but to actually pollute less, burn less fossil fuels and use less water," said Katie Blanchard-Reid, member of Active Students for a Healthy Environment, the organization behind the Green Games.

Norm Richards, the man in charge of the heating and ventilation systems on campus, said conserving is not just about environmental concerns.

"The students are paying for the money that goes toward facilities," Richards said. "It's not being paid by the state. Every dollar that's saved keeps tuition from going up

or keeps fees from going up."

The school's total water and energy costs totaled \$823,000 last year, and the school consumed 14.9 million gallons of water, according to Richards. The average usage of electricity in Mills Hall, for example, is seven kilowatt hours per student per day.

"The idea is to raise awareness about how much energy is wasted and how much we could be doing," Blanchard-Reid said. "Really basic things, which don't end up happening here because people just don't think about it, include taking shorter showers and turning off your laptop at night."

The biggest waste in the dorms includes leaving residence hall windows open, according to Richards.

"The systems in all the buildings run 24 hours a day, and they're designed to maintain a specific temperature," Richards said. "I,

like everyone else, like nice fresh air, but if you leave your windows open, what ends up is we are trying to cool or heat Asheville."

Many people left their windows open during fall break, according to Richards.

"Over 30 percent of the windows were open in Mills Hall, and nobody was here," Richards said.

Things like turning off computer monitors at night are easy to do and save a lot of energy, according to Richards.

"If you turn your monitor off, you are going to be using only a third of the electricity you would use otherwise during the day if you leave it on continuously," Richards said.

Holly Michaelson, freshman student, said she does not waste electricity.

"I always turn the lights off in the bathroom," Michaelson said. "I always turn off everything before I

leave. I think I do OK."

By saving energy, students get the chance to enter a raffle to win a mountain bike, prizes from Malaprop's Bookstore/Cafe, Marble Slab Creamery ice cream shop, the Fine Arts Theatre, the Sword and Grail game shop and Spiritex organic clothing.

To measure which residence hall wins, Richards and ASHE will calculate the percentage change in water and electricity use in each resident hall compared to an average consumption per student per day during previous Octobers.

Richards says complete accuracy remains impossible because many buildings share power sources.

"For instance, Highsmith heats and cools Founders, so when we look at Founders' energy use, we have to look at Highsmith," Richards said. "And South Ridge and West Ridge share their water, so we look at that, too."