

Campus changes affect everyone

By Dom Kramers
Assistant Entertainment Editor

With the many new changes and developments occurring on campus, the initials U.N.C.A. are no longer meaning what some have in the past termed "U.N.C. Almost." Instead, this once small and relatively unknown university is growing into an institution of higher learning recognized by more than just the few who live in the Asheville area.

Students and faculty are coming here from around the world to study, research and teach. New programs of study are broadening the scope of educational opportunities. And the addition of new facilities is creating an atmosphere of expansion, growth and change.

As can be expected with any sort of change in structure and tradition, though, not everyone is satisfied with the ramifications of progress on our campus. In fact, the sentiments evoked by many seem to prefer a stagnant state of affairs than realization of any progress at all.

History has shown that in any period of transition those who instigate change and those who eventually inherit it usually sit at opposite ends of the table without ever coming in direct contact with one another. It is those sitting in the middle, passing the gravy and enduring the spills, who feel really affected by it.

UNCA is at that point now. Administrators and planners are dishing out the gravy for the benefit of future inhabitants, while the current population patiently tries to continue life in as bearable a fashion as possible.

Undoubtedly, conflicts of interest arise. On the one hand, there are those whose current purpose is to envision the future status and possibilities of the institution. While on the other hand there are those whose future hinges on its current status.

An effective and mutually beneficial transition can occur only when each side realizes, understands, and appreciates the goals and aspirations of the other.

Inevitably, UNCA's rapid expansion has and will continue to affect those who presently attend and work here. The situation is less than ideal. And

those affected have a right to complain.

It is important, however, that the opposing interests communicate with each other in an informed and intelligent manner. The administration is responsible for educating the campus community about its intentions. And in making decisions, it must understand how the transition period of progress affects those caught in the middle.

Similarly, the community must inform the administration of the hardships felt during the transition. It must understand the constraints imposed by any kind of change and respond with realistic complaints and suggestions.

Working together in a positive, constructive frame of mind, the UNCA community can effect the transition from a small college to a major university without creating an atmosphere of hostility. Listening to and understanding the "other guy's" point of view is crucial to a peaceful, productive change.

Baseball team gets the shaft

By Bill Vickery
Staff Writer

The county of Buncombe has now given the UNCA athletic department another slap in the face. After not allowing UNCA's baseball team to use McCormick field earlier in the year, Asheville hosted the Southern Conference baseball tournament last weekend.

The Buncombe County Parks and Recreation department would not allow the Bulldogs to use the field before the Asheville Tourists began their season. The reason given for this was to prevent damage to the grass.

A group of local students had to miss nearly three times as many classes as they should have because games had to be relocated on far away fields. All so the Parks and Recreation department could have a pretty field for the Tourist opener.

I pay taxes in Buncombe County, a portion of which goes to the upkeep of McCormick field. I doubt very seriously if any of the Southern Conference schools pay taxes here. Most students here at UNCA pay local taxes.

I know events like the baseball tournament are important to the local economy, but so are UNCA students. With the school on the

increase in admissions, it would seem that it is becoming more important to area merchants. Obviously not to city and county politicians, though.

If Asheville has such an intense love affair with Western Carolina University and the rest of the Southern Conference, then perhaps local high school students should leave town for school. Or maybe UNCA should make some minor changes, like a name change. What about changing our name to Western Carolina at Asheville, or simply change it to Southern Conference University. I doubt that either would work.

It seems that being the only university in town is not enough to merit fair treatment. I have no argument with Western and the other schools, but now I have more reason to resent them. Perhaps if UNCA can dominate them athletically for a few years, then our immediate area can be won over. Until then, UNCA will still be thought of as insignificant to county and city officials.

Baby M belongs with her dad

By Julia Coward
Staff Writer

The feelings of a mother for her child are so strong they transcend the boundaries of most social relationships.

No one would condemn a mother for killing someone who tried to hurt or steal her child; a mother is expected to protect her children anyway she can.

Mothers themselves know that what they would do to protect their children is not an issue up for discussion; they would do anything necessary.

But does this feeling, that runs so deep it would make a peaceful woman kill without hesitation, justify surrogate mother Mary Beth Whitehead's last minute decision to keep her baby in spite of a signed contract with the baby's biological father and adoptive mother?

Of course not.

Last month, a New Jersey court decided that Whitehead's contract with the Sterns was binding, and ordered Baby M turned over to her natural father, William Stern.

What makes this case different

from any other instance of a mother fighting to keep her child is the fact that here are two mothers -- and a father -- fighting to keep a child that they all consider their own.

Mary Beth Whitehead must consider, even through her pain, the reasons behind the conception and birth of Baby M.

The Sterns, whom Whitehead apparently thought of as nice people and good prospective parents, wanted a child very much and couldn't have one in the usual way; so they offered Whitehead, whom they apparently thought of as a nice person with good genes, a substantial sum of money for her services as surrogate mother.

Whitehead promised, by signing a contract with the Sterns, to carry and give birth to a baby, the natural child of herself and William Stern. The baby would grow up with its natural father and its adoptive mother.

A recent poll by The New York Times and CBS News shows that most people agree with a judge's decision to turn Baby M over to the Sterns, according to The Associated Press.

This shows that there is widespread acknowledgement of the feelings of adoptive mothers and the feelings of fathers (whether natural or adoptive) -- feelings which are different from those that come from giving birth, but which are strong and should not be ignored.

Whether Whitehead signed on as a surrogate for noble purposes or for the money, the end was the same: two people who wanted a child (one of whom was the natural father) would have one, and Whitehead would get paid for it.

Did Baby M's adoptive mother await her birth as eagerly as her natural mother? I think so. And was her natural father excited about being a daddy? Get serious.

All these feelings started the day Whitehead promised to have a baby for the Sterns. If she's not willing to keep her promise, the courts must keep it for her.

It's not the money involved that makes this contract binding; it's the feelings.