

# The Blue Banner

"Man has his will -- but woman has her way!" -- Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr.

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## NCSL approves resolution on weather policy at weekend session

Kevin Ellis  
Staff Writer

The North Carolina Student Legislature (NCSL) approved a resolution the weekend of Jan. 28-30, asking for an inclement weather policy for all universities in the state system.

The resolution will go to the N.C. General Assembly, the Council of State and the University of North Carolina board of governors, the policy-making arm of the state's university system.

"We want to see guidelines set across the state that they (local chancellors) would have to follow," said Eric Goltry, a UNCA senator who also serves as attorney general of the NCSL.

The requested action leaves some leverage for local decision makers, Goltry said, but it will add some responsibility such as checking with state Department of Transportation officials to ensure roads are passable.

"We decided that student safety was the primary goal," said NCSL Gov. Amy

Chamley, a sophomore at Appalachian State University.

This year's harsh winter bolsters the legislature's concern over sending university students to class when the temperature drops dangerously low, Chamley said.

While not wanting a leave policy as liberal as the public school systems, Chamley said universities in the state need to be more willing to call off classes. "We had classes (in Boone) in weather where the ground was just covered with ice," Chamley said. "Students were required to go to classes, and there were a lot of injuries, and it was unsafe."

The legislature took its action at its monthly interim council meeting held at UNCA from Friday through Sunday.

About 90 students representing 11 colleges and universities in the state attended the interim council meeting.

In other action, the NCSL also passed resolutions in support of welfare reform and toughening the crime of sexual assault against the mentally or physically disabled.

The NCSL's resolution calls for welfare recipients to receive benefits for a maximum of two years, something that President Clinton is asking for in his yet

unreleased welfare reform package.

The students' resolution also limits families to benefits for two children.

UNCA Sen. Karen Brinson said she doesn't support all of the details in the resolution, but voted for it because she believes the N.C. General Assembly needs to pass welfare reforms.

"At least a voice would go from this body to the General Assembly, and maybe they will take some action," Brinson said. "I want the General Assembly to know that we are at least supporting welfare reform of some sort."

The NCSL resolution on the sexual assault of the mentally or physically disabled requests a change in state law raising the crime from a Class D to a Class B felony, Brinson said.

The NCSL defeated a resolution calling for a repeal of the state's fornication laws, Brinson said.

During the interim council, UNCA student Charity Evans announced her intentions of running for governor of the NCSL at its 57th annual session held in Raleigh in March.

UNCA's NCSL group meets each Wednesday at 6 p.m. in Room 37 of Highsmith Center.

### Teaching diversity



Staff Photo By Annemarie Riley

A diversity educators workshop was held on Jan. 29.

## Center for Jewish Studies begins seminar

Lectures focus on relations between African-Americans and Jews

Brenda Edgerton-Webster  
Staff Writer

The UNCA Center for Jewish Studies opened a four-part seminar entitled, "Crossing Bridges: Linking African-American and Jewish Lives," on Feb. 2 at the Owen Conference Center.

"The program was not conceived to address problems on the UNCA campus," said Edward Katz, assistant professor of literature. "It was designed to build common interests and understanding between the Jewish and African-American communities, rather than wait for a critical situation to happen."

An African-American civil rights activist and Jewish scholar, Julius Lester, gave the keynote speech entitled, "Blacks and Jews: A Reassessment."

"The political challenge is to create a broad-based coalition that would go across the ethnic spectrum," said Lester. "I'm talking about whites, Hispanics, Asians, Jews, what have you."

Lester explained that often Jews view African-Americans as having shared experiences in history, but many African-Americans find this view offensive. Although the Jewish-European experience is similar to the African-American experience, the Jewish-American experience vastly differs, he said.

Lester gave several suggestions to bridge the two communities, especially on university campuses.

"An example might be to come together to set up a once-a-week soup kitchen, go work at a soup kitchen, or help at a homeless shelter," said Lester. "They could come together and try projects that would be a contribution to the community."

Lester also recommended communities work together on local issues of interest, encourage social activities between churches and synagogues, and take responsibility for their children.

Currently a professor in the Judaic and Near Eastern studies department at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Lester worked as a civil rights activist in the 1960s, according to a UNCA news release.

In his book entitled, "Lovesong: Becoming a Jew," he recounts his past as a civil rights worker and how becoming a Jew was more of a birthright than a conversion of religious faith.

"My great-grandfather was a Jew, I say to myself," said Lester in his book. "I don't know what that means, not if meaning is confined to words and concepts. But meaning is also feeling and sensation and wonder and questions."

Lester, a publisher of at least 19 books,

has received several literary awards including the Newberry Honor Medal, the Lewis Carroll Shelf Award, and the New York Times Outstanding Book Award, according to a UNCA news release.

Over one hundred people attended the session last night, including community leaders, area high school students, and UNCA faculty and students.

"I felt as though I was meeting an icon from the past," said Dwight Mullen, associate professor of political science. "I remember when he was a Black Nationalist, and to see him now and how he survived the sixties is amazing."

"I think that he is a really practical person who has done a lot of deep thinking about what goes on in the world," said Janie Wilson, adjunct associate professor of environmental studies. "He sees a lot of changes on a community level, rather than on an island-institutional level."

The overriding theme centers around attaining self identity through unity as a nation, rather than individual-culture identity, said Katz.

"I thought Dr. Lester had an unusual ability to present issues in an understandable way," said interim chancellor Larry Wilson. "I thought this was a wonderful start for the series."

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## Weather Report

Friday Saturday



Hi 40 Lo 26 Hi 46 Lo 36

Weather Report courtesy of the National Weather Service

UNCA Atmospheric Science Department offers updated forecasts through the 24 hour Weatherline...251-6435

## Amnesty International chapter to hold conference on human rights

Teri Smith  
Staff Writer

"The Other and Us: A Human Rights Conference," sponsored by the UNCA chapter of Amnesty International, will be held at the Owen Conference Center on Feb. 19, beginning at 10 a.m.

The conference will be funded by the UNCA Cultural and Special Events committee and the UNCA Student Life Task Force. The Alliance for Global Education also is sponsoring the event.

"I think the goal of this conference is to create a learning environment in which students, faculty, staff and the public can learn about issues of human rights and how issues of human rights occur in other societies around the world, as well as at home in the United States," said Kenneth Betsalel, assistant professor of political science and the faculty advisor for the UNCA chapter of Amnesty International.

"This isn't a conference of do-gooders, nor is it a conference of political activists," said Betsalel. "It is a conference intended for learners, and our belief is with learning we can make informed choices about what we want to do as citizens."

"We realize that it is difficult to draw a crowd to these events," said Betsalel. "But, our view is that if only five people came, but they learned something, we would consider this a success."

"The conference is not about who's right or wrong, but about raising issues concerned with human dignity. The theme of the conference is 'The Other

and Us," and what we propose to do is to learn how human rights issues in far away lands are happening to people who are just like us," said Betsalel.

The conference will open with two hours of interdisciplinary workshops which will be facilitated by faculty members from a number of different departments, according to Betsalel.

"In this first session, we're going to be really learning how to ask questions about human rights, and we'll be learning together how there may in fact be paradoxes within the human rights movement and in dealing with human rights issues," said Betsalel.

"We're not answering anything here. The theme really is how to raise questions and how to see others as ourselves," said Betsalel.

"People who, in some sense, may be separated from us by their religion, language, gender still are like us in that they are human beings in that they should be accorded respect and treated with dignity," said Betsalel.

During the morning session, there will be a selection of readings which include things like the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights and recent newspaper articles on human rights.

"We will use these selections as a springboard to discuss these issues in individual groups and then come together as a larger group to see what we have learned," said Betsalel. "I want to emphasize that throughout

See "Conference," on page 8



Staff Photo By Lat Ray

### Technological advancement

A fiber optics system is planned to be installed at UNCA's Steelcase Teleconference Center in 1995 or early 1996.

## NOTICE

The Blue Banner has been running an advertisement on the announcements page entitled "Alaska Summer Employment." The ad was sent to The Banner by a company called Progressive Media and offers students \$2,000-\$6,000 per month to work in canneries and on fishing vessels.

On Jan. 31, The Blue Banner received an anonymous letter, along with an article from a recent issue of the Seattle Times. The article claimed that seven young Puerto Rican men called the number on the ad and were told to buy a plane ticket to Alaska to begin their work.

They raised enough money to do so,

got to Alaska, and found that there were no jobs. Currently, they are still in Alaska trying to raise enough money to return home.

The Blue Banner regrets any inconveniences in running this ad. We have discontinued the ad, and will no longer accept anything from Progressive Media.