

The Banner

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NEWS BRIEFS

Board of Trustees meets

The UNCA Board of Trustees delayed a final vote to approve the university's ten-year master plan at its quarterly meeting on April 16. The master plan, designed over the last two years, was reviewed in a public meeting on April 15 and will be up for a vote at the Board's next meeting in July.

The master plan addresses all areas of the campus and university development over the next decade. A central academic core of the campus will be maintained within the university loop, while residential and athletic areas will be developed on the southern and western edges of the loop. UNCA's top priorities for development are the expansion and renovation of Highsmith Center and the construction of a new administrative and academic building near the main campus entrance, said Alyn Pruett of the consulting firm Wallace, Roberts and Todd.

While the costs of the master plan have been estimated at \$10 million a year over ten years, Chancellor Patsy Reed argued that a large investment was necessary to secure UNCA's future.

"While we do not have a definitive price tag for the proposed master plan, we know that the cost of its implementation will be significant," Reed said. "We have not yet achieved the sort of campus environment that supports the full realization of UNCA's special mission as the state's public liberal arts university."

Charges against Patch reduced

Dr. Steven Patch, associate professor of mathematics, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor marijuana charge last week. Patch, who was arrested on campus March 7, was initially charged with a felony, but will now receive a year's probation as part of a first offender's program. At the end of the probation period, the misdemeanor will be cleared from his record, Patch said.

"I really think that if this had gone to trial, I would have been found innocent," Patch said. "Given the university's (drug) policy, even the slight risk of being found guilty was unacceptable." Patch also cited the strain of a trial on his family, colleagues, and teaching duties as additional reasons for deciding to plea bargain.

UNCA's drug policy states that employees can be suspended for at least one semester if they are convicted on a felony charge. With his plea bargain, the conviction is deferred, Patch said.

Hazardous waste workshops

UNCA's environmental studies program and the N.C. State Industrial Extension Service will co-sponsor workshops on hazardous waste management from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Tuesday, April 22 and Monday, May 5, in the Owen Conference Center.

The one-day workshops will address hazardous waste management, emergency planning, and pesticide application for small businesses producing hazardous waste. The workshop will also review case studies of small businesses and changes in the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act.

Early registration is advised. The \$89 fee includes a manual with updated information on hazardous waste law, management options, emergency planning and notification, and community right-to-know requirements. For information, call Dr. Gary Miller at 232-5184.

Greenfest



PHOTO BY ELISE FOX

Freshman Kirsten Byrd works to help landscape the new Health and Fitness Center as part of Greenfest. Greenfest is an annual event in which volunteers work to beautify the campus with flowers, trees and shrubs.

First phase of fiber optic network begins

By Stephanie Hunter
Staff Writer

The first phase of the campus fiber optic network will soon become a reality. If everything goes as scheduled, the bid for this project will open on April 17, according to the director of university computing.

A fiber optic network and related equipment will bring communication and instructional capabilities to the level expected of present-day university campuses, said Kern Parker.

Four phases are involved in completing this project, and the installation of the fiber optic cable is only one of them. The expected total cost of all four phases is \$2.4 million. "The part that we're getting ready to bid, we hope, will be about \$350,000. The part that we're getting ready to bid is the fiber-optic cable," said Parker.

UNCA has a firm that has come up with the specifications on how to complete this project of install-

ing the fiber-optic cable, and companies can now give bids on how much money it will take for them to complete the project, said Parker.

"If the bids come in at a range that we can afford, we're hopeful that we'll be able to build this project over the next six months and have it really ready to go by the start of the spring 1998 semester," said Parker.

Fiber optic cable is made of glass, and changes data into pulses of light. This allows it to move at very high speeds around the campus, said Parker.

"Basically, fiber optic cable provides a very high speed way to transfer computer data around the campus," said Parker. It gives very high speed data conductivity everywhere, even in the student dorm-room computer hook-ups for every resident, not just one per room.

"Faculty and staff desks and computer labs will all be hooked up to this fiber optic network as well, so they can receive very high speed data communications and be able to do lots of good things with information data and access," said Parker.

With this network, communica-

tion will be more than 100 times faster than the kind of telephone modem communication that students and faculty currently use, said Parker.



ARTPARTS

Installing this network represents an important step for UNCA, Parker said. As one of the later schools to get this system, UNCA needs to maintain competitiveness with other universities.

"It's important for UNCA to remain up-to-date in order to attract the best students and the best faculty to the campus," said Parker. Not only will this help UNCA maintain its standards, but UNCA

also needs this in order to keep up with the world, said Parker.

This construction project requires that cables be installed under ground and connected to all of the buildings on campus. "Robinson Hall is the main part of the network and everything kind of emanates from there. Then, there's a big loop of cable that goes around the campus," said Parker.

Robinson Hall, Ramsey Library, and Karpen Hall represent the three main hubs for this system on campus. The cable will run underground, through conduit (underground pipe to run cables through).

Then it will be hooked up in these buildings in a special way, and then all the occupants at that building can get the right kind of interior wiring in order to start using the high speed data, said Parker.

A lot of building will not accompany this project. However, a lot of digging trenches and putting in underground pipe will be seen on campus, said Parker.

There are three other phases to be funded: internal wiring of the buildings from the communication

rooms to the desktops, installation of the network electronics, and buying network-ready computers for all faculty and staff who need them.

So far, the chancellor has only said that the installation of the fiber optic cable will take place. However, efforts are being made to find money to fund the other three parts. "Hopefully, we can find the money to pursue two of the other three parts. We're not so hopeful about getting every faculty and staff member a new desktop computer," said Parker.

"To build the network completely, you have to do four things. The part that we're doing now is only one of the four things. You have to put fiber optic cable in between the buildings—that's the first part. That's what we're putting the bid in for," said Parker.

The second part requires re-wiring the buildings internally. Wires have to be brought down from all of the rooms in each building and connected with the fiber optic cable so

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Election discrepancy

Ballots and computer records differ by 15

By Catharine Sutherland
Staff Writer

Allegations of voter fraud surfaced in the wake of Student Government Association (SGA) elections last week, following one senator's call for a ballot recount. Freshman Senator Zach Petersen said the 15-ballot discrepancy between the number of ballots cast and the number of student records tallied in poll computers may have signified voter fraud.

"It was off by enough that it could have affected the vice-presidential race," said Petersen.

The close race, in which junior Tiffany Drummond defeated sophomore Josh Littlejohn by eight votes, has sparked concern among students and SGA members as to the security of the current voting system.

"There has been no race in the last two years except mine and Josh's that has been that close," said Drummond. However, she believes the close vote proves that no one tampered with its outcome.

"It really cannot be a stuffed ballot box with 15 (extra) votes," Drummond said. If someone were going to stuff the ballot box, he or she would have probably stuffed the box with at least 100 fraudulent votes, not a number as small as 15, said Drummond.

Most people involved with the election considered the discrepancy between the ballots and the computer records normal. SGA Election Commissioner Kenya Smith said the numerical difference occurs during every election for a specific reason.

When a student votes, explained Smith, a poll worker must enter the student's social security number into the computer to check his or her student status and to record his or her vote to prevent additional voting under the same name. The student may then deposit a paper ballot in the ballot box.

The discrepancy between computer records and paper ballots comes from the votes of those students who wish to have their records withheld from the computer system for reasons of privacy, Smith said. She added that commuters

and nontraditional students comprise the majority of this group.

"Their student status is not in the computer records but is in the registrar's office," said Smith. Instead of recording these students' voting status in the computer system, poll workers highlight their names on a computer printout at the poll.

Smith said she checked the printouts throughout the two-day election to make sure that none of the names had been marked at different voting stations, which would have meant that a student had voted more than once. Nonetheless, the number of paper ballots remains different from the number of records in the computer system at the close of the election.

"If everyone had their records in the computer and there was a discrepancy, then that would be a big problem, but everyone doesn't," said Smith.

Smith said she believed Petersen questioned the ballot discrepancy solely because of its relation to the vice-presidential race, in which

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Some students choose safety over parking fines

By Shelley Eller
Staff Writer

university. I also think that students should know where their money goes when they pay their fines."

The money students and faculty/staff pay in parking fines also goes toward officer uniforms, office supplies, psychological and drug testing for officers, office furniture, printing services, and hand-held radios.

"The expense charged for decals are added to student fees," said Gregory. "This money goes toward a fund that provides parking. It is not a part of the public safety budget. Paid parking ticket fines go into the budget instead."

Many students on campus feel the fines they are expected to pay are sometimes unjust. Some commuter students feel it is unfair that there are no designated spaces available near the bookstore located in the Highsmith Center.

"I think that there should be some closer spots available near the bookstore," said Patrick Gladys, a

post-baccalaureate student in education. "I have been ticketed in the visitor's section because I went into the bookstore. Those tickets are the most expensive aside from a ticket for parking in a handicapped space."

"Students have a right to complain about the lack of parking spaces near the bookstore," said Gregory. "Sometimes these problems are overlooked. A good way for students to get something done about it is to present suggestions to SGA."

Issues of safety also prompt students to park in non-designated areas.

"I have parking tickets from parking in the spaces in front of the soccer field because I will not walk up from the lower Southridge after dark by myself," said Jennifer Peterson, a junior psychology major. "It is unsafe to walk that road late at night alone because no one would hear you scream if some-

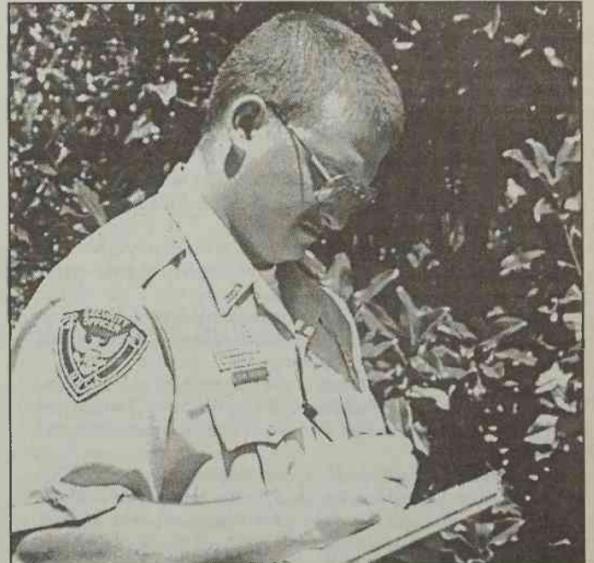


PHOTO BY BONNER BUTLER

Public safety officer Steve Pressley writes a ticket for a parking violation. The fines maintain the bulk of the office's budget.

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