

## Freshman boom, no bust



PHOTO BY ROB HAMMONDS

Senior Jessie Pisano pleads her case with Public Safety Officer Dale Williams. Since the start of the crowded school year last week, Williams said he has been averaging 70 to 80 tickets per day.

By Martha Ball  
Staff Writer

Despite the serious housing shortage expected due to the largest freshman class in UNCA's history, placing students in on-campus housing was not a major problem last week, according to administrators.

At the end of the business day Aug. 20, 476 freshmen were enrolled at UNCA, according to Archer Gravelly, director of institutional research.

This gave UNCA a total 3,157 students, compared to 3,088 at this time last year, Gravelly said. Last year's freshman class was 455 students.

While campus crowding was manageable, the first week of classes did involve some cramped condi-

tions. Housing coordinators tripled students in double rooms and placed a few in residence hall lounges and a local motel during the first week of classes, Eric Iovacchini, vice chancellor for student affairs, said.

"We've had some real patient people," Iovacchini said.

The housing problem appeared to be solved by Friday, according to Pete Williams, director of housing. "We will have a permanent spot for everyone and the overflow problem will be solved," Williams said.

Administration knew it had more students than space and purposely overbooked dorm rooms, Iovacchini said.

"It's like the airlines. You overbook and figure out how many aren't going to show," he said.

In the case of dorm rooms, it was a little more complex. Students' room preferences and genders were matters in the guesswork, Iovacchini said.

"Student numbers reflect more men than usual," he said.

The enrollment shift went from 55 percent women, 45 percent men to a 54-46 ratio.

"For UNCA that's a shift of 30 to 50 people, which causes another challenge. It's like a chess game."

There were more no-shows than usual in Governor's Village, a collection of single-room residence halls that are a popular housing choice for upperclassmen, Iovacchini said.

However, the Village rooms were held open until Friday, when the students' reservations would be canceled.

Few students were inconvenienced during the week, according to Williams.

Eight spaces were used at the Four Seasons Motel on Merrimon Ave., five students had to add themselves to a double room, and a few slept in beds set up in the lounges of the Governor's Village, he said.

"We had 25 spaces (available in the lounges), but didn't have to fill all of those. We had a higher priority to move those people out of the lounges," Williams said.

Another way administration tried to make space available for incoming freshman was by offering students who had reserved rooms in the residence halls a \$200 credit on their fall semester bill to give

See HOUSING on page 10

## Racquetball courts closed indefinitely

Officials continue to search for cause of floor problems

By Amanda Thorn  
Staff Writer

Bowed glass and moving floors have indefinitely closed the racquetball courts for class and student use in the newly renovated Justice Gym.

Three weeks ago, Justice Gym employees noticed that the carpet outside the racquetball courts had moved, said Ron Reagan, director of facilities planning. An investigation by the physical plant determined that the glass wall surrounding the courts was bowing toward the basketball courts and the floor was moving, all causing the carpet to move. Only the glass at the bottom of the courts has bowed, Reagan said.

"We are currently trying to find out what is causing the floor to move. It could be a combination of things, and we are trying to narrow it down," Reagan said. A flooring contractor has removed boards near the front of the glass to help find the cause of the problem, he said.

According to Reagan, it is normal for wood to contract and expand due to a rise or drop in the temperature. Expansion joints were placed in the floor of the racquetball courts, which were constructed last year during renovations to the gym, to allow the floor to expand and contract naturally.

"We are looking at the humidity level in the courts and expansion joints as a potential cause of the (floor) expansion," Reagan said.

"Right now we just don't know exactly the cause of the floors moving. We do know that the courts are moving more than they should. Our contractors are all key players in trying to resolve the issue," said Reagan. Reagan is unsure how long the courts will be out of use.

"It could be two weeks, two months, or next semester. I hate this happened right before school started and inconvenienced the students," Reagan said.

The racquetball courts became a popular option for students using the new gym facilities after their official opening last January. Last semester, the facility was used constantly, said Maggie Smith, facilities manager at the Justice Gym.

"It was bad timing for this to happen to the racquetball courts right before students arrived," said Smith.

Senior Jamie Kibler played racquetball in the new courts nearly every day last semester.

"I am not happy that the courts are closed because I might not get a chance to play racquetball again at UNCA since I am graduating," said Kibler, an atmospheric science major.

"I also don't understand how this could happen after putting so much money and time into building the gym," Kibler said. The Justice Center renovations began in November of 1994 and took over two years to complete. "I hope there are not any

See COURTS on page 10

## Violent summer sparks safety concerns for students

By Veronika Gunter  
Staff Writer

Statistics show teenagers and twenty-somethings to be the most likely victims of violent crime in Asheville and, although on-campus crime remains at low levels, students need to protect themselves, said Asheville's chief of police.

"Most any crime, particularly aggressive assault, involves youth," Asheville Police Chief Will Annarino said. "Statistics and experience show that."

"Like it or not, there are rules you have to play by to be safe."

The most serious crimes reported on campus in 1995 and 1996 were two simple assaults involving pushing, according to the Department of Public Safety's annual report.

UNCA has ranked safest in comparative studies of colleges in the Southeast for several years.

Despite campus statistics, however, the recent unsolved murders of young women in Asheville has heightened concern for youth-directed crime. Amber Lundgren, 20, went down with friends the night of June 1. She was last seen alive walking alone up Lexington Avenue. Her nude body was found the next morning. She was stabbed to death.

Lundgren planned to attend UNCA this semester, studying art or photography.

Police found the nude body of Garnetta Davis, 19, beside a warehouse three miles from UNCA. Police have not released her cause of death but have determined foul play.

It appears the victims did not know their killers, who remain at large.

"These crimes are very alarming to us," UNCA Public Safety Director Dennis Gregory said.

"The persons responsible are still out there and no motive is known, to my knowledge. We should get the word out to all young women."

This type of crime is among the hardest to solve and hardest to protect the community from, Annarino said.

"It's random crime, being at the wrong place at the wrong time," he said.

Young people are involved because they are out in the community interacting more than other age groups and often put themselves in a position to be a victim, Annarino said.

"It frustrates me that people don't practice safety more. We want to assume the best so society becomes complacent about crime."

Gregory considers the level of

student awareness of public safety's on-campus services "pretty good." The department comprises eight sworn police officers and two security guards.

Public safety presents outreach activities for the community several times each semester. These tend to be crime prevention presentations held in the residence halls.

"I feel great about safety on campus," Gregory said. "There are so many crimes just outside of our jurisdiction, but not on campus."

During 206 traffic stops of suspicious vehicles in 1995-1996, many students coming home late were inconvenienced, but no complaints arose.

"I think this shows that our officers behave with a great deal of courtesy and students realize that we have student safety in mind," Gregory said.

"I hope we don't become a victim of our own success. We can get over-confident and fail to do things to prevent crime," he said.

Asheville's crime statistics improve annually, Asheville Police Department Officer Debby Yanik of the Criminal Analysis Unit said.

Rape, aggravated assault, larceny, robbery and burglary rates have steadily decreased over the past three years. Homicides have re-

### VIOLENT CRIME

UNCA has consistently suffered fewer incidents of violent crime than schools of comparable size located in cities of comparable size to Asheville. (Numbers are per 100,000 students.)

