

# The Banner

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## Mandate causes loss of holiday

### Students face classes, not vacation, on Labor Day

By Troy Junge  
Contributing Writer

Of the 16 University of North Carolina constituent campuses in the state, 15 scheduled Labor Day as an observed holiday, according to the UNC General Administration's Program Assessment and Public Office. Only UNCA held classes on Sept. 1, meaning a day of learning, instead of vacation, for students, and one of work for the majority of faculty and staff.

The loss of the Labor Day holiday came as a surprise to most students and "didn't seem well-received," senior Kate Dwornik said.

"It's a shame for those people who were expecting to have the day off. It didn't seem fair to the support staff that had worked through the summer," Dwornik said.

According to faculty and administrators, however, the loss of Labor Day as an observed holiday was the most satisfactory option available to the university following a mandated increase in class days by the UNC general administration last year.

UNC general administration announced a system-wide policy change in the summer of 1996, requiring a minimum of 75 class days per semester, excluding exam week, said Tom Cochran, assistant vice chancellor for academic affairs.

In an effort to comply with the new guideline, UNCA added 3 days of scheduled classes to its calendar, one of which was Labor Day.

The goal in devising the new calendar was to preserve an equal amount of class time for every sched-

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## Politics on campus



PHOTO BY ROB HAMMONDS

Mayoral candidate Leni Sitnick (left) discusses election issues with Paul Hunt and Julie Pearson, co-organizers of Students for Sitnick.

### STUDENT VOTES

In the 1996 Asheville city elections, 18-29-year-olds accounted for only 4.41 percent of the vote. UNCA alone could potentially offer more than 2,000 voters. Here's how the numbers break down.

- 3,179 UNCA students
- 2,232 live off campus
- 1,194 have an Asheville city address
- 947 live on campus (an address that makes these students eligible to vote)
- Total of 2,141 potential student votes
- 4,916 voters registered for city elections as of July 18, 1997

SOURCE: THE INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

**Friday, Sept. 12, is the last day to register to vote in city mayoral election. Registration tables will be set up in front of the library.**

## Low voter turnout inspires activism

By Veronika Gunter  
Staff Writer

Low voter turnout by young people, those 18-29 years old, has made at least one UNCA student "feel terrible" enough to take action in the face of upcoming city elections.

"I want our group to improve turnout, to coordinate people at UNCA to vote," said Paul Hunt, a senior sociology major and co-founder of Students for Sitnick, a campus political group organized to support Leni Sitnick, one of four candidates running for mayor this year.

In the 1996 elections, 18-29-year-olds accounted for 4.41 percent of the Asheville city vote, casting 566

ballots. Hunt hopes to increase these numbers.

"Our biggest goal is to get people registered (to vote), and also advocate Leni Sitnick for mayor," Hunt said.

Time and energy often factor into students' political participation, according to postgraduate student Amy Cunningham. Organizations and students can get bogged down with their own affairs and miss out on political activity, she said.

Though she served as co-chair of the Students for Gantt organization at UNCA last year, Cunningham said she feels she hasn't had the time to be active in the city elections.

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## Dorm addition raises issues of campus growth

By Catharine Sutherland  
News Editor

The pit of red clay next to South Ridge residence hall, soon to be UNCA's fourth residence establishment, West Ridge, will provide housing for an additional 150 resident students upon opening in the fall of 1999. The \$7.6 million housing expansion has sparked concern among many students about the university's plans for growth.

"It's kind of interesting that (the university's administrators) keep advertising a small school, and then keep expanding," said junior David Rothman, a political science major.

"The majority of students come here because it's a small school with a low professor to student ratio," senior Moque Krape said.

Junior David Wilcox agreed. "(UNCA) is special because of its size," said Wilcox, a recording arts major. "If you want to go to a big school, there are other schools to go to."

In a recent visit to UNCA in August, Governor Hunt advised the growth of the university.

"I think this university needs more resources to have the kind of future it needs to have," Hunt said. UNCA needs additional buildings and easier access from the highway, he said.

However, administrators claim the planned increase in on-campus housing is not indicative of a dramatic escalation in the student population.

"3,500 is as big as we want to get," which is "very weird for a public institution," said Archer Graveley, director of institutional research.

"All other (public institutions) equate being big with being better. UNCA does not do that," Graveley said.

The overall push toward an increase at UNCA lies in the category of students, not in their numbers, said Eric Iovacchini, vice chancellor for student affairs.

"We're not going to grow numbers-wise," Iovacchini said, predicting a minimal growth of 15 or 20

students per year. Rather, he said, UNCA will see a growth in the number of students living on campus.

"We're trying to play the game of more FTE's (full time equivalents)," he said. The university hopes to gain more full-time students, Iovacchini said, and expects to see a decrease in commuter and

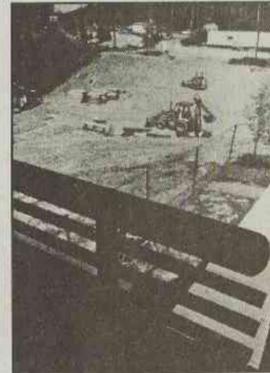


PHOTO BY ROB HAMMONDS

Construction began this year on West Ridge, the campus' fourth residence hall. The building will house 150 students when it opens in the fall of 1999.

part-time students.

"That's where we need residence halls and things that are going to satisfy full-time students," Iovacchini said.

"I think all of us (faculty, staff, and administration) feel real strongly that this is a good size for this school. What we're looking for is the right mix," he said.

3,179 students currently attend UNCA, with 947 currently residing in the residence halls.

Despite many who claim UNCA's advantages lie in its small size, not all students are against the growth of the university.

"Without adding growth to our campus, we're not generating enough student flow because there's no major attraction here," said Julie

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## Forests in crisis, experts say

By Veronika Gunter  
Staff Writer

Southeastern forests rank "globally outstanding" in terms of biological value and ecosystem fragility, and their conservation status is "critical," said the keynote speaker at Saturday's Forest Health Conference at UNCA.

The keynote speaker Dr. Reed Noss of Oregon State University, editor of the journal *Conservation Biology*, urged attending activists, citizens, students and faculty to protect our unique, vulnerable forests.

The regionally and internationally prominent scientists convened in the Owen Conference Center at the invitation of the Western North Carolina Alliance, addressing the question, "What are the real forest health issues in the Southern Appalachians?"

Air pollution, human encroachment, and exotic species are the major issues in forest health in the Southern Appalachian region and worldwide, according to UNCA environmental studies professor Gary Miller. "Our forests are suffering from a series

of problems resulting in the decline of both communities and species," said Miller. The conference held Saturday was intended in part to serve as a rebuttal to U. S. Representative Charles Taylor's recent report on the region's environment, Miller said.

"It was mainly targeted to better inform the public about forest health issues in response to Taylor's view on forest health," which some felt was not as objective as it could have been or should have been, Miller said.

The term "forest health" served as a battlecry for salvage logging on public lands under the direction of Taylor, who attached a controversial salvage timber rider onto a 1995 House budget bill.

The rider opened logging on public lands to any trees susceptible to fire, disease or other damage and withdrew the right to public appeal of these timber sales.

The lecturers forwarded a holistic definition of forest health and called for a re-evaluation of forest management practices on public lands at the all-day seminar.

Dr. Robert Zahner, professor emeritus of

forestry at Clemson University, traced the history of forest management practices in America. He concluded that practices remain tied to the timber industry and a narrow view of forest value.

"Foresters see commercial trees and non-commercial trees," he said, and ignoring biologically valuable aspects of forests have "imperiled" the Southern Appalachians.

Clear-cutting methods of timber extraction and accompanying road building and chip mills number among serious threats to forest health in our area, Zahner said.

UNCA freshman Erik Breedlove has experienced the devastation potential of roadbuilding in the Southern Appalachians firsthand. Breedlove, a native of Grayson Co., Va., cited current construction underway to transform Interstate 58 from a two-lane to a four-lane highway in portions of the Grayson Highlands, part of the Jefferson National Wilderness Area, as one example of the current forest health crises.

"There's no real way they can put the road through without bulldozing the whole (for-

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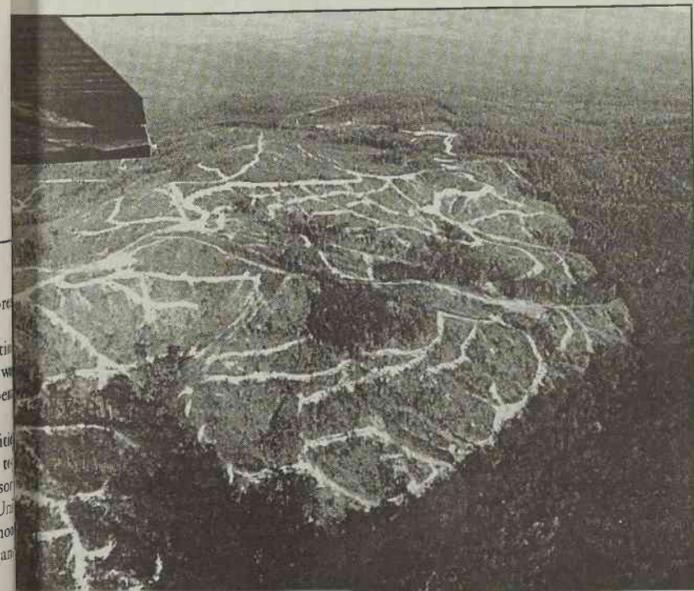


PHOTO BY CATHARINE SUTHERLAND

Clearcutting, or removing all the trees on a tract of land at once, has had devastating effects on forest land in the Southern Appalachians. A media tour flight on Saturday circled this example, located not far from Asheville on the border of McDowell and Rutherford Counties.