

# The Banner

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## Gay/lesbian conference deemed a success

By Nicole Miller  
Staff Writer

UNCA held its first gay and lesbian studies conference last weekend on the university campus.

The conference, titled "Queer Geographies: Community and Place in History," was sponsored by the Office of Academic Affairs, departments of sociology and literature, humanities and honors programs, and student life task force.

"Gay studies had reached a point where it

needed to have its own conference," said David Hopes, professor of literature and one of the conference coordinators. "It was a desire to get together with scholars and have a meeting of the minds and exchange of ideas."

Hopes said that over 70 people attended the conference, and that the number of participants surpassed what conference organizers anticipated.

"I was really surprised that it went so well," said Hopes. "In terms of numbers of attendees, it was a surprising success. In terms of the academic value of what went on, it was a stupendous success."

Jan Harrow, director of planned giving and a coordinator of the conference, said that it was difficult to get an exact count of participants because people were allowed to sign up for one or both days, and some people attended only select events.

Although the conference was free to UNCA students, Hopes said that only a few attended. He cited lack of interest and awareness of the conference as possible reasons for the low student attendance, but added that he had not expected a large number of students to come.

"Mostly in these conferences you might see graduate students, but you almost never

see undergraduates," said Hopes. "So in that sense it was a better than average representation of undergraduate students."

According to Hopes, conference coordinators plan to make the gay and lesbian conference a yearly event at UNCA.

"It was called, deliberately, in every possible place, the 'first annual,'" said Hopes.

Hopes also said that conference coordinators will put more effort into getting UNCA students involved in next year's conference, and that he would like to see more student papers submitted for presentation at the conference.

According to Hopes, the cooperation

and support given to conference coordinators by the university was "very pleasing." He said that the planning committee received no opposition from the university or student body when organizing the conference.

However, he expressed disappointment in local media coverage of the conference. "There was an editorial in the Asheville Citizen-Times on Sunday by the redoubtable [Citizen-Times columnist] Will Haynie, who had his panties in a wad about our having this," said Hopes.

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## Confronting homelessness



PHOTO BY KEN BETSALEL

Forty photographs taken by Associate Professor of Political Science Ken Betsalel are currently on display in Ramsey Library. The photographs are from his current documentary project, "Houseless is not Homeless: Photographs and Stories." Betsalel's photographs will be on display until the end of April. See story on page 4.

## Housekeepers may be forced to work graveyard shift

Committee claims that nighttime hours will increase housekeepers' efficiency

By Gene Zaleski  
Staff Writer

A UNCA committee has endorsed a plan to change the hours that academic building housekeepers work from a daytime shift to a nighttime shift.

Academic building housekeepers currently work from 5 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. The new hours under consideration are 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., or 11 p.m. to 7 a.m., said Stephen Baxley, director of facilities management.

The UNCA Outsource Steering Committee is recommending the change as a cost-cutting measure. Bookstore Manager Mike Small said that the Outsource Committee was assembled in response to a mandate by the North Carolina General Assembly, which called on all state-funded universities to increase the efficiency of their university support departments, and to investigate the possibility of contracting out university support services.

The Outsource Committee is also reviewing several other university support offices such as publications, printing services, and grounds work to see if any changes can be made to make the departments more efficient.

"The committee looked at housekeeping and endorsed to change it," said Baxley. "However, none of this has been decided as of yet."

Housekeepers who would be affected by the change voiced concern about the impact that nighttime hours might have on their families.

"We will not be able to see our families because when we are sleeping, our families are working, and when our families are at home, we will be working," said Housekeeper Reva Waldrup.

Housekeeper James Ramsey said

that he takes care of his mother at night, but will "make other arrangements in order to accommodate the new hours."

Housekeeping Team Leader Tammy Justice said that she is worried that housekeepers might quit as a result of the change in hours.

"As a team leader, I have to worry about people quitting in my group," said Justice. "For some people it is just not feasible to work at night. Everyone's schedule will have to be changed."

"Sleeping hours, eating hours, times when you must run certain errands. It will all have to change," said Justice.

Many housekeepers said that they will rearrange their schedule in order to work the nighttime shift, but

According to Baxley, the night shift will allow the housekeepers to get more work done.

"(Housekeepers currently) have from 5 a.m. to 8 a.m. to get any significant cleaning done, Baxley said. "From 8 a.m. on, the buildings are being used and the housekeepers really do not have the opportunity to get it cleaned and to do their jobs to the level we would like to see it done."

"It is commonplace in large businesses to have a housekeeping staff come in and do the heavy cleaning at night so the business can run more successfully," said Baxley.

Baxley also said that the change in hours will also help the students who have classes in the morning.

"We think if all the cleaning is



PHOTO BY PRESTON GANNAWAY

Housekeeper Kit Hensley (pictured above) may have her work schedule shifted to nighttime hours as part of an university effort to increase the efficiency of UNCA support services.

added that they prefer the current hours.

"I don't really like the idea," said Housekeeper James Teague, "but I need the job, and if working at nights means keeping it I'll do it."

"It is either change our hours or outsource," said Housekeeper Julene Wilson. "A lot of us have a lot of time invested in the system, and you really do not want to lose the benefits and the hours that you do have."

"I work two jobs, and the hour change will just reverse my schedule a little. I'll just work one and come here instead of working here and going there," said Wilson.

done before 8 a.m., the student will be able to come in and go to class without having to step over any buffing cords," said Baxley.

"It will also allow students to use the restrooms without having to interrupt the housekeeping crews," Baxley said.

However, Waldrup said that housekeepers serve many student needs during their current daytime schedule.

"We are needed during the day," said Waldrup. "We can help students who need help such as cleaning up broken glass. If we worked at

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## Progress being made on Highsmith renovation project

By Chris Brooker  
News Editor

The proposed renovation and expansion of the Highsmith Center has moved one step closer to reality. The University of North Carolina Board of Governors forwarded a funding request for the Highsmith project to the North Carolina General Assembly in late March.

The University of North Carolina General Administration has made the recommendation to the legislature for all of their proposed projects, and the Highsmith Cen-

ter is on that list," said Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Eric Iovacchini. "We think we are in good shape as far as the university administration is concerned, and think that getting on the list of requests was step one."

The General Assembly will consider the funding request at its short session this May.

The Board of Governors requested that the legislature fund the full \$12.4 million cost of the project.

"Originally when we submitted this project a couple of years ago to the Board of Governors, the amount requested for the project was a little bit less," Iovacchini said. "The

Board of Governor's has upped our request, which is great."

According to Sharyn McDonald, director of the Highsmith Center, the architecture and design part of the proposed expansion is almost complete.

"We are working with (facilities planning) on the final design of the food area, which includes a coffee shop and food court," McDonald said. "Everything else is done. We will have one more final look, where each group that will be housed in the facility can check the plans to make sure things like electrical outlets and computer outlets are in the right place."