

The Banner

Volume 29 Issue 3

February 18, 1999

UNCA freshman pleads guilty to charges

By Amelia Morrison
Managing Editor

and one misdemeanor charge," said Marianne Epstein, director of public information at UNCA.

"It was a felony related to sodomy and a misdemeanor related to solicitation of sodomy," Epstein said.

At this point, Epstein said she has not received any official communication from the court about Perkins.

"I have not been officially contacted," said Epstein. "If

we were officially contacted, I was not aware of it."

According to an article in the *Asheville Citizen-Times* (Feb. 4, 1999), Perkins was charged with nine offenses, including rape, child molestation and aggravated sodomy in an incident involving a 14-year-old girl. Perkins, along with five other Paulding County High School students, faced various charges because of the January 1998 incident,

according to the article.

Following Perkins pleading to charges, the university will decide what, if any, actions to take regarding Perkins' status as a student and as a basketball player.

"The next step UNCA is going to take is to use professionals to determine whether Nick Perkins may be a danger to himself or others if he remains on campus," said Epstein.

The university administration will meet Feb. 18 to discuss putting the process in place, according to Epstein.

"When it comes to misdemeanors and felonies related to off-campus behaviors, most campuses don't have a hard and fast policy," said Epstein.

"UNCA is like most campuses. Therefore, each case is considered individually," Epstein said.

Epstein said that, according

to the UNCA student code, "there is only one area that students are automatically expelled for related to felonies and misdemeanors: trafficking in schedule I drugs."

Perkins' eligibility to play for the UNCA men's basketball team may also be affected by him pleading guilty to the charges.

"He is not playing now, and he will not be playing the rest of the semester," said Epstein.

"My understanding is that he would continue to not play this semester."

Willis Demond Clay, who was charged with the same nine offenses as Perkins and pleaded guilty to charges of felony statutory rape and misdemeanor solicitation of sodomy Jan. 11, was fined \$1,000 and sentenced to five years probation and 30 days in jail, according to the article in the *Asheville Citizen-Times*.

UNCA campus recycling increases by 73 tons

By Meghan Cummings
Staff Writer

UNCA has increased its recycling by 73 tons in the last two years, according to the school's recycling coordinator.

"Grand total recycled and composted in 1997-98 was 236 tons," said Lynne Patzig, greenhouse manager and recycling coordinator at UNCA.

The school's recycling has increased by about 45 percent, or 146,000 pounds from the 163.23 tons of material recycled in 1995-96.

However, the school could still significantly decrease its waste, according to Acker.

"It is not enough to recycle more. We have to decrease waste," said Melissa Acker, UNCA's landscaping director.

In order to determine how much recyclable material is ending up in the trash, Patzig and Acker do a yearly solid waste analysis of the campus.

"We have to get bags of garbage out of the dumpster and dump them out on the ground to see what percentage could be recycled and also composted," said Acker.

"What we found was that two-thirds could still be recycled or composted. In other words, we have people still throwing away cans, still throwing away bottles, and still throwing away paper," said Acker.

"I'm really pleased with the direction we're going in," said Patzig.

The increased participation in campus recycling is largely due to the work Patzig has put into the program, according to Acker, Patzig's supervisor.

"Our amounts have gone up tremendously in every area since Lynne started as recycling coordinator," said Acker. "They've gone up a tremendous amount in glass, plastic, and paper."

According to Patzig, almost everyone on campus seems to be increasingly willing to recycle.

"I think people are participating more and more," said Patzig. "For what minimal contact I have with each department, people really seem to have a genuine interest in helping with it."

The school could encourage more people to recycle by putting out more bins around campus according to Vanessa Harper, vice educational coordinator of Active Students for a Healthy Environment (ASHE, formerly UNCA's ecology club).

"I appreciate the glass, plastic, and aluminum recycle bins around campus, however they need to be more prevalent," said Harper.

Continuing to educate people with posters about recycling could also help increase participation, according to Harper.

"I think the posters they put up are a very positive educational tool that are really blatant about saying 'recycle this, don't recycle this,' and I think that's great," said Harper.

"I'm not sure if they're up over every place where things could be recycled. If they're not, they need to be," said Harper.

In addition to the posters, Julie

Pearson, former president of the ecology club, suggested another way to educate students about the need to recycle.

"One suggestion we came up with was to make a video about what can be recycled and why it is important to recycle that we can show to freshmen during orientation," said Pearson.

However, according to Harper, recycling is only part of the solution to the problem of waste and resource depletion, especially in the case of paper.

"Really, the overall thing that I think needs to be changed is the plan of attack," said Harper. "They need to go more towards the root of the problem instead of continuing with these Band-Aid solutions. It's all good and great that we are trying to recycle, and we should recycle what we have. However, first it is more important to address consumption and what types of products we are buying."

The school needs to make sure that it buys products that can be recycled within the system, according to Candice Carr, president of ASHE.

"Those Styrofoam cups that you buy drinks in at Dante's and Cafe Ramsey can be recycled," said Carr. "They are number six recyclable, but the problem is we do not recycle number six, so they just get thrown away. They should make sure that what they purchase matches up with what can be recycled."

Buying products that are made from recycled materials is just

See RECYCLE page 10

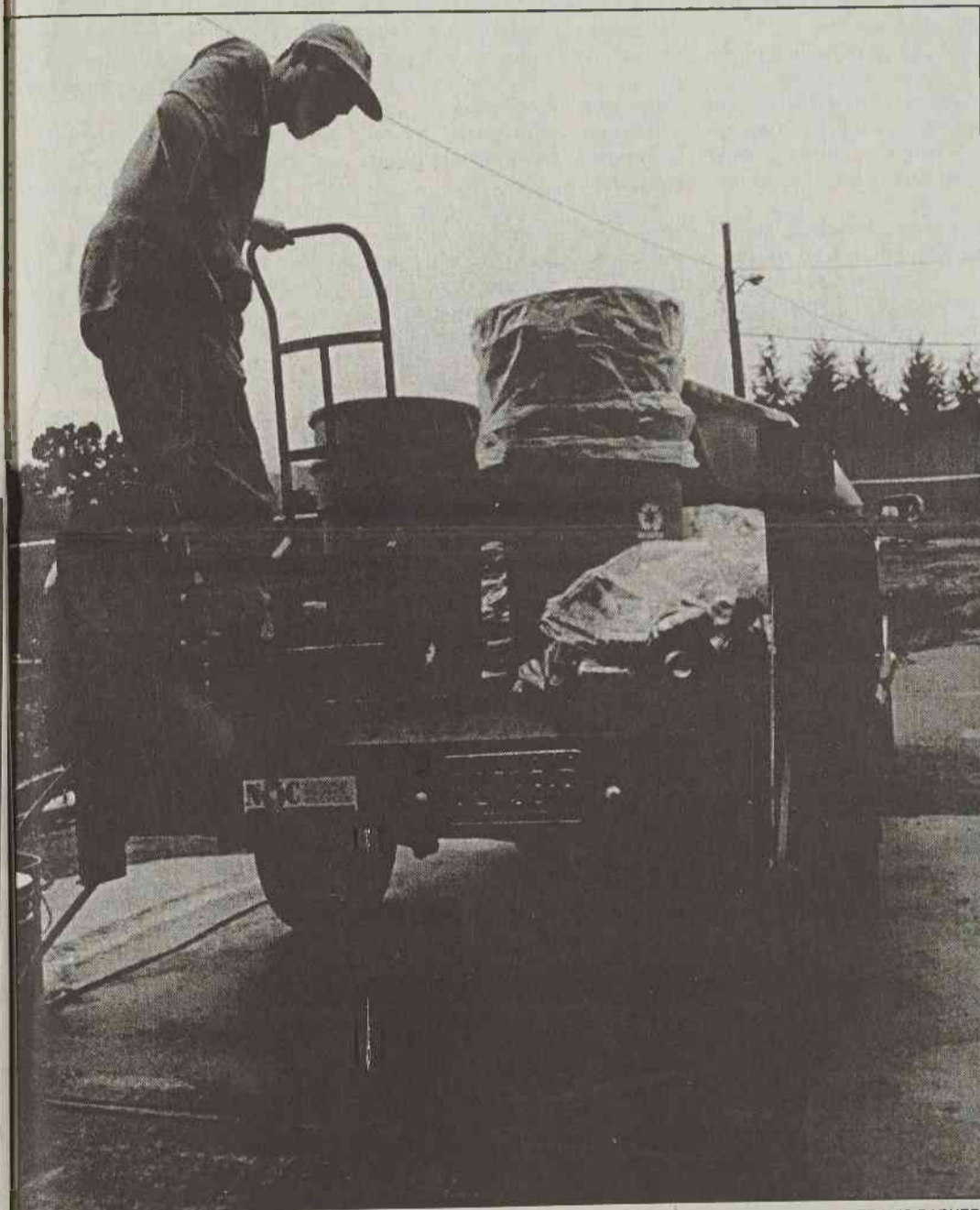


PHOTO BY TRAVIS BARKER

Scott Waring, a UNCA recycling employee, exchanges full recycling bins for empty ones.

Student charged with possession of firearm

By Mike Bryant
Staff Writer

UNCA police officials charged a freshman student with a felony offense on Feb. 15.

"Justin Lane Donaldson was served with a warrant for his arrest for the possession of a handgun on school property," said Jerry Adams, an investigator for public safety at UNCA.

"Possession of such a weapon on campus by a student is considered a felony by the state of North Carolina and UNCA," according to Adams.

The gun was discovered in the student's room on the morning of Feb. 10 following an anonymous report to Nancy Williams, assistant director of housing and residence life, according to Adams.

"Donaldson cooperated fully with campus police during the investigation at his

dormitory room," said Adams. "At my request, the suspect showed me where he kept the gun in his room."

"Upon inspection of the weapon, I discovered it was fully loaded. After unloading the gun, I took the suspect and weapon to the public safety office on campus and filed an incident/investigation report," said Adams.

Adams described the confiscated evidence as a type of small handgun.

"The weapon is a Jennings .22 caliber semi-automatic handgun," said Adams. "It was loaded with six rounds of .22 caliber ammunition (hollow point)."

This is not the first incident of weapons being discovered or reported on campus property, according to Adams.

"There have been a couple of other cases involving weapons over the last few years," said Adams. "Students and non-students need to know that UNCA has a zero tolerance for the possession of weapons on school property."

The possession of a weapon by a student on campus grounds is automatically a felony

offense, according to Adams.

"The state of North Carolina and UNCA have deemed the possession of a weapon by a student on university property to be a serious crime," said Adams.

"Felony convictions can carry a potential penalty of more than a year in prison. UNCA policy does not allow for the lesser charge of a misdemeanor, as in the past. It is very important that students realize the serious consequences of violating this policy," Adams said.

Donaldson's first appearance in 2nd District Court was scheduled for Feb. 16, according to Adams.

The suspect is free on an unsecured bond pending the outcome of the initial court hearing.

An explanation of the charge, the suspect's right to legal representation and a trial date will also be addressed at the hearing.

The suspect, Donaldson, refused to comment on the specifics of the incident at this time.

"I do not wish to make any statements about

the incident until after this matter has been brought before the university conduct system," said Donaldson.

The suspect's future status as a UNCA student and housing resident will be considered following a university conduct system hearing, according to Williams.

"Whether or not the suspect will be permitted to remain at UNCA as a student or housing resident may be determined at the student conduct hearing," said Williams.

Many students expressed strong opinions that weapons should not be permitted on the campus for any reason.

"I am against any kind of weapons on campus," said Carol Billings, a senior biology major. "The atmosphere on a college campus should be one of learning. Students should be able to feel secure anywhere on campus."

"I am very sure that Donaldson would not have used the gun in any threatening manner," said Thad Eckard, a junior philosophy major and Donaldson's roommate.

"I do not think a college campus is a place for guns. I am not sure why he had a gun in

the room. I do feel very badly for him. I just do not think he realized the consequences," Eckard said.

Campus police agree that Donaldson does not appear to be a reckless or irresponsible individual, according to Adams.

"The suspect said he had the gun for his protection only," said Adams.

"The student said he felt very safe on campus, but he carried the gun with him on trips to downtown Asheville at night," according to Adams.

Regardless of the reasons, university policy does not permit any type of weapon on campus, according to Adams.

The UNCA student guide for 1998-99 states that "violation of the firearms/fireworks policy is defined as the possession of weapons on the campus or other areas used by the university."

Firearms, ammunition, fireworks, gasoline or other combustible or explosive materials are not permitted in the residence halls. Knives other than those used as kitchen tools are also prohibited in the entire residential area."