

THE BLUE BANNER

Volume 37 Issue 2

The University of North Carolina at Asheville

February 13, 2003

Winter weather interrupts class schedules

Christina Clayton
News Reporter

Recent snow and ice has caused concern among some students regarding how UNCA decides whether to hold, cancel or delay classes.

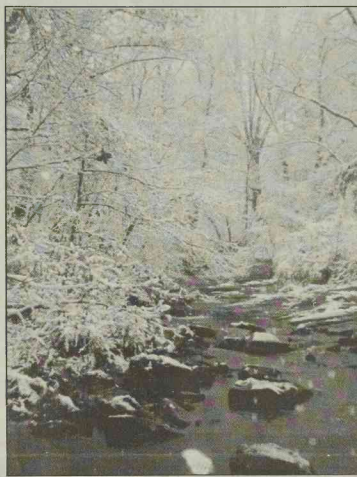
"Since there is a pattern of bad weather, get up a few hours earlier, drive slower, that's how you get to class," said Mark Padilla, vice chancellor of academic affairs. "Assume it's a part of your day, not just as a student but as a person in Asheville during a winter storm. The more people can take responsibility for living in this area and not blame me for the weather, the more high quality educational experiences we'll have."

The decision to cancel or delay class due to inclement weather falls into the hands of Padilla. "My job is not to predict the weather," said Padilla. "My job is to make the most rational determination based on what predictions I have available to me."

That information comes from staff on campus and information on the Internet, as well as from other area schools. When snow falls on the area, or is about to, the day begins around 4:45 a.m., said Padilla.

"I get up and look outside, I look at Web pages and spend 15 to 20 minutes studying it," said Padilla. "I look at the Weather Channel Web site and several other Web sites with weather maps."

Padilla then begins making phone calls. "I speak with Steve Baxley, director of facilities management, to get information about the campus," said Padilla. "I call people to get information about what other schools are doing, I call the Chancellor, and I call Merianne Epstein, director of public relations, and she arranges the announcement of the class de-



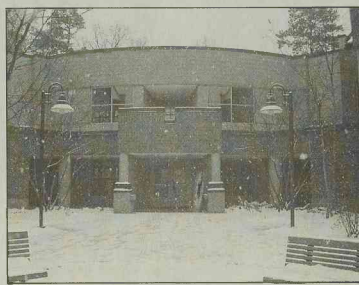
COURTESY OF CHRIS SUMMERVILLE

Several days of snow and ice forced class cancellations and delays, creating schedule problems for classes, as well as road safety concerns among commuter students.

lay or cancellation on the web." Students such as Andrea Gentsis, a sophomore computer science major, voice concerns on how late they feel they find out the information. "I think they've made fairly good decisions so far," said Gentsis. "I wish they could make them earlier, but if they don't have any way to tell how the roads are going to be in the morning, what can they do?" As soon as Epstein receives the information, she sends out and posts it. "The first thing we update is the

UNCA Snow Line, because more people have access to that than anything else," said Epstein. "The second thing we update is the Web site. Then we start the media list and the e-mailing. We try to keep everything current."

The snowline has class information available at (828) 259-3050. During winter weather, the UNCA homepage displays a snowflake graphic and "Adverse Weather" link at the top of the page that leads to class information. In the past, students have had



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trouble with receiving up-to-date information on class scheduling during winter weather when using local media sources, according to Padilla.

"It's important just to call the UNCA snowline, that is the first thing that is changed and that's the authoritative information," said Padilla. "Everything else is an interpretation or passing along of information."

UNCA has more control over its own information, leading it to be more reliable, according to Epstein.

"Historically, the snow line, UNCA's homepage and our e-mail messages are more reliable about what we're doing about classes than the media," said Epstein. "It doesn't mean the area media are doing a bad job, but we are able to change our messages faster than they can." The late start schedule used during adverse weather has confused some students, according to Epstein. The schedule is available, "on the web, it's in the UNCA

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Sports

Women's basketball lose by 30, remain winless in BSC
■ see page 4

Mountain Jam

Always alive with the Dead
■ see page 7

Student fees increase

Ginger McKnight
News Reporter

The UNCA Board of Trustees recently approved an increase in student fees for the upcoming 2003-2004 school year.

"We do have one of the highest fees in the state," said Jenny Bowen, student government association president. "That's pretty well known. We have one of the lowest tuition, but one of the highest fees."

The decision on the student fee increase began with the campus fee committee, co-chaired by Vice Chancellors Eric Iovacchini and Wayne McDevitt. This committee has a set of guidelines to follow when deciding on student fees, provided by the UNC President's Office.

"Each fall we get directions from the president's office as to what to do with regards to review of fees, required fees, for the coming year," said Eric Iovacchini, vice chancellor of student affairs. "It gives us directions as to what we need to do, what the guidelines are, what we need to make sure we consider and not consider and what the time frame is for getting them any suggested changes."

The committee starts out by reviewing these rules before making any decisions.

"We usually start out by making sure we understand the rules, the guidelines. We make sure we understand what the fees have been in the past," said Iovacchini. "We make sure that we understand what we're going to establish as priorities and that we communicate that to the individuals who are responsible for the administration of student fees."

The committee listens to administration representatives who present requests for specific fee increases. These requests account for each cent to show how increases will benefit the university, according to Iovacchini.

"It's basically a very clear outlined budget, usually it has research that follows it," said Bowen. "Every cent is accounted for."

The committee decided on increases ranging from \$1.50 to \$11, for a total increase of \$33.25 per year. This 4.88 percent increase will bring student fees up to \$714.25, according to UNCA's Website.

"The state almost expects every school to give a 4 to 5 percent increase every year in the fees," said Bowen. "Student fee increase is average. It happens every year and every year it's going to be about the same price as we are going to have to pay."

The decision on how much money each administration receives also takes into account factors such as an increase in utilities and the direct impact the cost of fees would have on students.

"If the fee area has personnel associated with it, and a number of them do, there is hope that there will be some salary increases in this years operating budget," said

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Local student hangout robbed three times

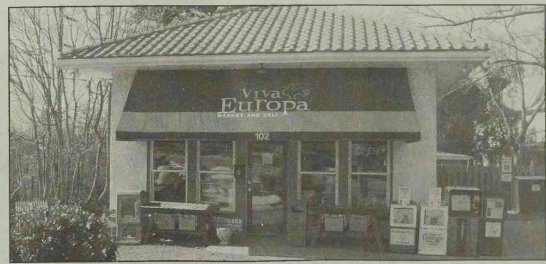
Becky Reese
News Reporter

Three nighttime robberies occurred at Viva Europa, a Montford deli, since mid-December 2002.

"I do know from some of our customers that they've expressed some concerns about things at nighttime and stuff like that, not just for coming here, for anywhere in the Montford area now," said Glenn Goldberg, owner of Viva Europa. "Walking down the street, going to the ice cream store or whatever at nighttime, they think twice now."

The first incident occurred in mid-December at approximately 7:30 p.m. The incident involved three people, but only one person actually held-up the store. The employees present gave "very good descriptions of them, but they're young and probably not on record already," said Goldberg, who believes the suspect is a minor.

"An underage guy came in and



TARA BARONE/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Viva Europa, a deli located in Montford and frequented by UNCA students, was robbed three times.

was asking for Black and Milds," said nine-month employee David Roberts, who worked the night of the first incident. "I asked him for ID and he didn't have it, so I sent him away."

"Then he hung outside with a couple of friends for a little while," said Roberts. "Another kid came in, that was a friend of his I guess

because they were hanging out together, and he asked me for Black and Milds, but he didn't have ID. He pulled out the gun after I asked for his ID so I gave him all the money, and he ran out the back door. I called the cops, locked the doors and did all the usual stuff."

The second incident occurred Jan. 7 at approximately 8:30 p.m. The

suspect broke the front door glass and stole two tip jars worth \$5, \$2 of it in change, and a 24-ounce Corona Beer, according to an APD incident report filed Jan. 13. The crime cost Viva Europa at least \$1,000 for the broken glass alone, according to Goldberg.

The third incident occurred Jan. 10 at approximately 2:30 a.m. Two

employees and five customers witnessed the incident, according to Goldberg. Approximately \$250 was stolen, according to the incident report filed by the APD Jan. 23. Goldberg has mixed feelings about the APD's response to the recent robberies.

"I feel they've responded fairly well, but there's definitely some communication issues, even amongst them," said Goldberg. "The patrolling officers in our area here, our district, did not know two, three, four, five days later that there was an incident to this particular property," said Goldberg.

"Things like that in today's Internet world have got to be able to be much easier and quicker," said Goldberg. "Now, if they don't have those capabilities for whatever reason, funds or whatever that is, the public needs to know about that."

The APD has made no arrests, but they have assigned one detective to all three incidents to find any similarities in the cases, according to Goldberg.