

THE BLUE BANNER



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Volume 38 Issue 5

The University of North Carolina at Asheville

October 16, 2003

NEWS BRIEFS

Ryan Sniatecki
News Reporter

UNCA

Writers Aly Goodwin and Naomi Johnson will continue UNCA's Writers at Home fall series with readings at Malaprop's Bookstore/ Cafe on Sunday. Goodwin, a North Carolina Native, won a James Perkins Pearson Award from the Literary Council of N.C. Johnson received a Pillsbury Foundation Creative Writing Grant, and a Pennington Foundation Fellowship. The works of both writers have appeared in several publications.

CAMPUS CRIME

A man reported that the rear window of his vehicle had been shot through by pellet guns while parked on campus. Officers discovered individuals with pellet guns in the front yard of a nearby house. The officers received permission to search the house and discovered marijuana and drug paraphernalia. Two non-student, white males, Chad Benjamin Deaton and Michael Shane Jones, are both charged with one count each of marijuana possession, possession of drug paraphernalia and damage to personal property. Both reside at 100 Lookout Road.

ASHEVILLE

Brownie Newman led the Asheville City Council primary election last week with 4,446 votes, or 20.06 percent of the total votes cast. The next five winners were Jerry Bellamy (4,189 votes), Jan Davis (3,115), Jim Ellis (2,510), and A. Whiteside (1,967) and Chris Kelly (1,747). These six candidates will now run for three council seats in the Nov. 4 general election.

NORTH CAROLINA

The state Division of Alcohol Law Enforcement won a \$300,000 grant from the Governor's Crime Commission to combat underage drinking. The division will train and certify sellers and servers to avoid selling alcohol to people under the age of 21 and to patrons who are already intoxicated.

Certified servers may have better luck in the job market, because employers will want to hire those who can keep them from facing citations or lawsuits, according to LE director Mike Robertson. The division will also use \$100,000 seized from drug dealers to fund the program.

UNITED STATES

Workers at 44 Kroger grocery stores in West Virginia, Kentucky and Ohio went on strike Monday after rejecting a contract offer from the Cincinnati-based chain. The 10,000 workers join 70,000 union workers in southern California who are striking on Sunday after a contract dispute with three major grocery chains.

"We aren't asking for all of it, just a fair shake," said Randy Atkins, who works at a Kroger in Charleston, W.V.

Pete Williams, president of

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HILARY MCVICKER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Overlooks, like the one above, serve as focal points in a research poll geared towards assigning a value to the historic Blue Ridge Parkway.

Researchers scrutinize Blue Ridge Parkway aesthetics

Surveyed visitors place price of nature at \$240 per person

Cindy Steele
News Reporter

The Blue Ridge Parkway Scenic Experience Study is allowing researchers to place a dollar value on the aesthetic quality of the park's natural beauty.

"This study is a good example of research that helps citizens and communities better understand the value of their natural environment," said Leah Greden Mathews, assistant professor of economics and research participant.

The project evaluated areas along the southwest Virginia section of the parkway and is continuing to evaluate the results of the survey along the northern North Carolina section of the parkway.

Research found that V.A. visitors value the quality of existing roadside views at an average of \$240 per person. Multiplied by the estimated 7 billion parkway visitors per year, that places the total value of scenic experiences at \$1.7 billion to \$2.5 billion per year, according to an *Associated Press* article.

"I think of it as a means to an end," said Chad Morgan, assistant director of recreation for outdoors and sports clubs at UNCA. "If placing an economic value on the scenery creates a need to protect that scenery and those views more than they are doing now, I think it's a great idea."

Rising concern about residential development within view of the parkway is one issue the study will attempt to address.

"The park is 469 miles long and on average only 800 feet wide. As a result, much of what visitors see when they're on the parkway is not

owned or controlled by the park," said Mathews. "In some parts of the parkway, there have been noticeable land use change in the last several decades."

Many residents, tourists and students place a high personal value on the natural beauty the parkway provides.

"The whole reason for the parkway is the scenery," said Bryan Robbins, a junior marketing major. "If you don't have that, then what's the point?"

UNCA Outdoors had 1,300-1,500 students participate in its activities last year. Although most of their activities are more adventurous than what the parkway offers, Morgan said the parkway is an important outlet for many people.

"I think the parkway serves a very unique purpose for a lot of folks who want to get outdoors, even if they only want to get three steps outside their vehicle," said Morgan, who is currently working on a master's degree in parks recreation and tourism management. "It gives them an opportunity to appreciate some of the natural resources out there."

The results of the study show just how much the visitors value these natural resources.

"Respondents were not willing to pay much to improve scenic quality, but identified they would face significant loss in value if scenic quality was degraded," said Mathews. "In addition, we were

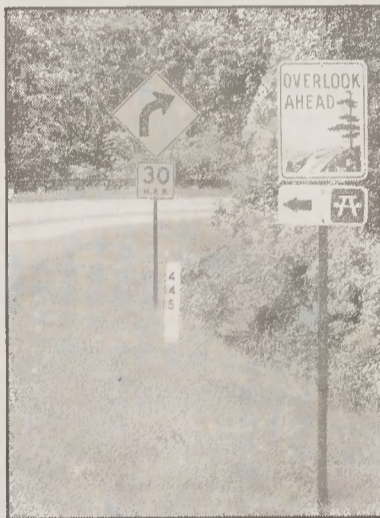
able to estimate specific changes in visitation that would occur if scenic quality changed and combined this with the expenditures that local communities could experience as a result of scenic quality changes."

The study surveyed visitors in southwest V.A. in the summer and fall of 2000 and in N.C. during summer and fall of 2002.

"We sampled visitors at various sites on the parkway including Mabry Mill, Moses Cone Manor and the Folk Art Center," said Mathews. "In each phase we hired several students to help implement the study. In the end there were about 800 visitors sampled in each phase."

Mathews and two other economists from Warren Wilson College and the University of Tennessee at Knoxville shared the responsibility for conducting the research.

"Because of the strong preference for existing scenic quality along the parkway that visitors revealed in this study, the parkway plans to communicate the results to communities along the parkway," said Mathews. "These communities will thus be empowered with information that they didn't otherwise have about the impact of scenic quality on their



HILARY MCVICKER/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Signs guide visitors to scenic views.

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UNCA shows links to recent political candidates

Ryan Sniatecki
News Reporter

With the Asheville city council general election nearing, a look back at the recent political season saw several UNCA alumni, family and even students throw their hats into the race.

Bryan Freeborn juggled his campaign with taking classes, working full-time and raising two children with his wife. Freeborn takes evening classes at UNCA as a post-baccalaureate student to earn a teacher's certification in social studies. Freeborn finished with 425 votes

or 1.82% of the 23,323 voter turnout.

Matt Raker, a recent UNCA graduate, worked on communications for Brownie Newman's campaign. Raker graduated in May 2003 with a double major in economics and environmental studies. Newman's camp collected the most votes in the Oct. 7 primary election.

"At school I headed up Unified Solar," said Raker. "We worked a lot with the group that Brownie heads up, Western North Carolina Alliance, so I got to know him pretty well."

Raker collaborated with Brownie on a series of public meetings including how to improve local mass

"Your humanities program was created on my porch."

Jan Howard
former candidate for city council
on her role in UNCA's history

transit last year.

"We just sort of made the transition that I would help him out on his city council campaign," said Raker. "He's definitely the most connected with the youth voice in Asheville, including students and other young professionals in town."

Raker maintains the campaign's database of supporters, coordinates direct mailings and put together Newman's campaign Web site, among other things.

"We coordinate a lot of the efforts of putting up yard signs around town, which you might have seen," said Raker.

Raker partnered with Active Students for a Healthy Environment (ASHE) to stump for Newman and register people to vote in Asheville.

"One thing that's important is your local vote is the most important vote that you have. It's where

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Pres. Bush squares off with United Nations

Kristen Ruggeri
News Reporter

The Bush Administration's pleas for help with the reconstruction of Iraq met skeptical responses from the U.S. Congress and the United Nations.

"I think the United States thought it was bigger than it is," said Liz Laxague, a junior French major. "But now it realizes it can't reconstruct Iraq on its own."

President Bush proposed \$87 billion for new spending in the U.S. war on terrorism last month. Of this, \$20 billion will go to the reconstruction of Iraq.

The rest will go to military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. If approved by Congress, the U.S. will spend more on Iraqi aid than it does on aid to the rest of the world combined, according to Forbes.com.

"I think we have a responsibility as well as a political imperative to continue with the reconstruction of Iraq," said Jeff Konz, associate professor of Economics.

Democrats criticize the government for taking away from education and social security money in the U.S. in order to reconstruct Iraq, according to nytimes.com.

Some people have misconceptions of the government's spending, according to Konz.

"There's a sense that if we choose not to spend \$87 billion on Iraq that we'll have \$87 billion just sitting around, waiting to go somewhere else," said Konz. "It's not as if there's a fixed fund out there and we're choosing how to allocate it."

"It's not when we spend a dollar on Iraq we're taking away from something else. It doesn't really work that way."

However, Republicans still cringe at Bush's proposal that would add to America's record deficit, already exceeding \$400 billion this year, according to the *USA Today* Web site.

The Bush Administration needs to help the U.S. get out of debt instead of putting it more into debt, according to Laxague.

"The problem is not the spending of the money," said Konz. "The money can be found as long as financial markets are willing to lend to us. It's basically unlimited."

Senate Republicans said they are currently working on a negotiation with Iraq that would require the country to pay at least some of the \$20 billion the administration wants to spend in reconstruction aid, according to nytimes.com.

"I don't think the United States should be paying so much," said Drue Fillmon, a junior psychology major. "I think other countries need to help, too."

The Bush administration is call-

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