

The Blue Banner

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NEWS BRIEFS

By LAUREN ABE
Staff Reporter

UNCA
UNCA hosts its Homecoming 2004 Celebration Feb. 16-21. Numerous events held on campus will accompany the dance, including a parade, Mardi Gras night in the dining hall and a reunion with the 1984 women's basketball team.

CAMPUS CRIME
Public safety towed a vehicle parked in a tow-away zone in front of the dumpsters by Founders Hall Feb. 15. That marks the 12th car towed in front of Founders Hall this spring semester. Campus police issued a student-conduct citation for underage drinking Feb. 12.

ASHEVILLE
Recent layoffs and manufacturing firms' shut downs continue to affect local charities in Western North Carolina. With the closing of several plants in the area, less people volunteer as schoolchildren's mentors, tutors, youth sports league coaches and scout leaders, according to the *Asheville Citizen Times*.

The layoffs and shutdowns of six companies affected two organizations in particular: the United Way and the American Red Cross. With over 1,000 lost jobs, the United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County will lose almost \$400,000 in donations.

The American Red Cross will lose more than 1,500 units of donated blood through the closings, as the plants held regular blood drives.

CHARLOTTE
The Charlotte-Mecklenburg police investigated whether recruits cheated on police academy tests. The police department discovered that some recruits studied parts from 20 out of the 82 tests, according to Chief Darrel Stephens.

The police department discovered a computer disk which contained the test questions Feb. 12. The department is unsure as to how many recruits had the questions and answers.

IRAQ
Muhammad Zimam Abd al-Razzaq al Sadun's capture Sunday in a Baghdad suburb brings the total number of most wanted Iraqi figures in custody to 42 out of the list of 55.

Razzaq, the former regional chairman of the Ba'ath Party was number 41 on the coalition's most wanted Iraqis list. A joint U.S.-Iraqi investigation led to Al-Razzaq's capture.

WASHINGTON, D.C.

President Bush's re-election team plan to organize a more aggressive campaign over the next few weeks. The theme of the campaign will be "steady leadership for times of change." The planned campaign focuses on what Bush officials believe are his positive traits and on the Democratic front-runner.

Former resident assistant faces larceny charges

By CHRIS CANTOS
Staff Reporter

Campus Police charged Steven McNeilly, a former UNCA resident assistant and Campus Police student employee, with larceny of computer equipment from a storage area on campus last semester.

"On the 25th of November, we got a report of a laptop computer that was stolen from room 17 of Robinson Hall, a computer storage area for the computer center," said Sergeant Jerry Adams, Campus Police Investigator. "The computer center staff was able to trace that computer, when it was being used, to a particular location, which was Mills Hall.

"During the investigation it was also found out that the person in Mills Hall had the computer, who was Steven McNeilly," McNeilly, a former resident as-

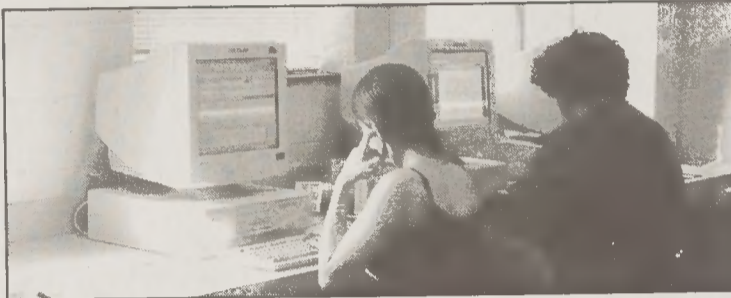
sistant in Mills Hall, also worked for Campus Police as a student employee, according to Adams.

"He has been employed by Campus Police for the past two years," said Adams. "His position was terminated immediately following the investigation, which means that we lost one student employee position, and that has not been refilled and probably won't be."

Once Campus Police completed the investigation, the department charged him with two felony counts, according to Adams.

"He was charged with felony breaking and entering, and with felony larceny," said Steve Lewis, interim director of the Campus Police department.

The stolen equipment also included a 40 gigabyte disk drive and a Palm Pilot, totaling \$2430 in equipment, according to the



MOLLY DRYMAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

UNCA offers free access to computers in residence hall labs.

Campus Police investigation report.

"They stole a laptop and a few other incidental things," said Mike Honeycutt, Information Center manager. "The laptop was the most essential thing."

Although Campus Police reported property crimes as the most numerous criminal incidents on campus, this particular case stood out, according to Adams.

"Normally, (larceny cases) do not involve breaking and entering into university-owned areas such as the computer center," said Adams. "This particular case is unique because a lock-picking set was actually used to break and enter."

Other than the lock-picking device used to enter, the computer

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MOLLY DRYMAN/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

The car boot inhibits movement of the vehicle until removed.

UNCA gives parking violators the boot

By ADAM McMULLIN
Staff Reporter

UNCA cracks down on parking violations by utilizing new car boots for those with outstanding fines. School officials apply the boot to cars ticketed five times or whose owners have \$100 in fines.

"It is more of a deterrent for people not to park illegally and if they get five tickets then they have to cough the money up then," said Diane Williams, administrative assistant/communication parking supervisor.

The owner of a booted vehicle must pay a \$25 removal charge, plus all outstanding fees.

One advantage to the boot is being able to collect fines from visitors, according to Steve Lewis, interim director of Campus Police at UNCA.

There is no way UNCA can collect fines from off campus violators otherwise, according to Lewis.

"(Visitors) are not affiliated with campus," said Lewis. "You can't get it through a payroll deduction as you can with employees and you can't charge it to an account because they're not students."

So far, Campus Police applied the car boot to only one visitor's car.

"We were trying to find a way to enforce parking regulations without towing," said Dr. Carol Schramm, interim vice-chancellor for student affairs. "I really don't want to tow cars off campus. It is so hard for students to be able to pay the money and retrieve (their cars)."

Towing cars is such an inconvenience for students that UNCA wanted to prevent doing it as much as possible, according to

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TOMMY GREENWOOD/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

High school and middle school students at the Science Olympiad participate in the bottle rocket competition on the quad. Students competed to see whose bottle would stay in the air the longest.

Science Olympiad offers learning experience for teens

By AMANDA EDWARDS
Staff Reporter

Middle and high school students from all over Western North Carolina came to participate in the Science Olympiad Regional Tournament at UNCA, Feb. 14.

"Science Olympiad is a tournament with different events in science, math, technology and teamwork that inspires middle and high school students to

achieve and participate in science," said Judy Beck, physics lecturer and co-director of the event. "I think it definitely encourages them to further their science education and possibly pursue a career in science."

Thirteen middle school teams and eight high school teams competed for the chance to go to the state tournament in Raleigh and possibly the national tournament in Pennsylvania. Students get to consult

with their coaches, who are usually their science teachers, and choose which events they want to participate in early in the school year so they will have time to build things and/or practice for the competition, according to Beck.

"They get to participate in these hands-on sorts of activities, like bottle rockets, cars and airplanes," said Carol Whitlock, math professor and co-director. "It allows them to have a lot of fun with science and

work with other people as opposed to memorizing facts and taking tests. They're building things and flying things."

Science Olympiad is an international, non-profit organization devoted to improving the quality of science education, increasing student interest in science and providing recognition for outstanding achievement in science education by both students

SEE SCIENCE ON PAGE 14

Bush sets Iraqi ultimatum

By JAMES RICHARD
Staff Reporter

The Bush administration insists on a June 30 deadline for electing an interim government, despite two massive suicide bombings recently in Baghdad, that introduced serious doubts that the country is secure enough for elections.

"If elections are possible, the issues become the conditions for those elections," said Linda Cornett, UNCA assistant professor of political science.

The focus right now is on issues such as who should carry out the elections and an appropriate election timeline, according to Cornett.

"I think it's going to be a longer hall than most people in the public thought it would be. I think it's going to probably be about the length the administration projected as they became involved in the war," said Sean Murphy, an undeclared sophomore. "I think that in a situation like Iraq, where you have such disorganization, it's hard to totally eradicate certain threats. Once you overthrow the government, there are still small bands, just like we have in Afghanistan. Right now there are groups so small that they slip through filters. There's no way to control that."

Officially, the United States main internal ally is the handpicked Iraqi Governing Council.

However, as the deadline looms, U.S. diplomats and military leaders continue searching for opinion leaders within the various Iraqi communities, according to Cornett.

"Most negotiations are informal because it's hard to determine who represents the Iraqi people. It's a matter of canvassing," said Cornett.

Establishing security remains the key concern for U.S. led coalition forces in Iraq.

Meanwhile, criticism of the administration's use of intelligence forced President Bush to call for an independent commission to study possible intelligence failures, after denying the need for weeks. One issue is the CIA's dependence on Iraqi exiles for accounts of Saddam Hussein's weapons of mass destruction, according to Cornett.