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NEWS BRIEFS

BY ADAM McMULLIN
Staff Reporter

CAMPUS CRIME

Unknown suspect(s) stole a UNCA computer from room 016 in Karpen Hall Feb 23. The perpetrator cut the computer's security cable and walked off with a monitor and CPU. An investigation is underway, according to Jerry Adams, investigator for the Campus Police.

Classrooms with computers are suppose to be locked at night, according to Adams. The crime probably occurred over the weekend. The door was found unlocked on the morning of Feb. 23.

Campus Police received a report of a stolen bicycle Feb 25. The bike's lock appeared to be picked, according to Adams. It was chained up at the bike rack at Ramsey Library and Robinson Hall.

Campus Police issued a student conduct citation for underage possession of alcohol in Mills Hall Feb 27. The student, also charged with providing alcohol to people underage, is being referred to student conduct.

UNCA

A group of UNCA students recently visited New York City and Washington, D.C. with UNCA's North Carolina Teaching Fellows Program.

The group took the trip to learn about education in a multi-cultural setting, and to see innovative approaches to teaching.

The Teaching Fellows visited Seward Park High in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where students have full access to a complete curriculum taught bilingually for Chinese, Spanish and Bengali students. They also visited Bard High School Early College, a collaboration of the New York City Department of Education and Bard College.

CHAPEL HILL

Conservative students at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill say they're successfully fighting the university's liberal tradition. Student activists say they're exposing professors, students and a campus atmosphere that they say is intolerant of conservative thought.

They have also spent thousands to import conservative speakers, such as author Ann Coulter and actor Ben Stein. Author and former marine Oliver North is scheduled to visit the university in the fall.

UNITED STATES

Massachusetts Senator John Kerry clinched the Democratic presidential nomination after winning nine out of 10 primaries March 2.

Kerry won primaries in California, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New York, Ohio and Rhode Island.

Howard Dean won his home state of Vermont even though he is no longer in the race.

North Carolina Senator John Edwards failed to win any of the primaries on Super Tuesday and subsequently quit the race.

White-only scholarship sparks debate

BY LAUREN ABE
Staff Reporter

A Republican student organization at Roger Williams University (RWU) in Rhode Island created a scholarship for only white students in an effort to protest affirmative action early February.

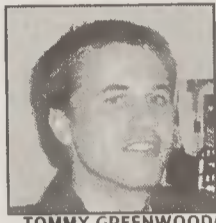
"It's a ridiculous idea. It doesn't address the issue of class, race or ethnic inequalities," said Jim Pitts, professor of sociology. "It's about reinforcing, but in a way that's a caricature of the old days."

Jason Mattera, the president of the College Republicans at RWU, created a \$250 scholarship specifically designated for white students.

Scholarships should be based on character and academic achievement rather than skin color, Mattera told CNN.

With the creation of this scholarship, Mattera challenges the pre-conceived issue or that white people are automatically privileged or rich, according to CNN.

"On a national basis, we need to pay attention to investing in the education of people long before college, people who drop



TOMMY GREENWOOD/
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER
Sean McDonald

out too soon or who are encouraged to drop out and develop more talent," said Pitts. "We need to give scholarships to a variety of income levels that have the talent to do well in college, whether they are white, black or Puerto Rican."

Mattera receives a \$5,000 scholarship for minority students, distributed by the Hispanic College Fund. He told the *Providence Journal* that ethnicity does not matter and that scholarships should be given for academic achievements. The Republican group also opposes race-based scholarships and affirmative action, according to CNN.

But some argue that scholarships based

SEE SCHOLARSHIP ON PAGE 12



JAMES RICHARDS/STAFF REPORTER

Dr. Polly E. Ross, is the medical director of WNC Health Services, located in Asheville on Grenada Street. The WNC Health Services offers confidential HIV antibody testing.

The health center is opened Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Volunteers participating in the HIV study are at minimal risk of obtaining the disease, according to Ross.

Scientists propose possible HIV vaccine

BY JAMES RICHARDS
Staff Reporter

German scientists launched the country's first test of an HIV vaccine on humans Feb. 16.

Fifty healthy volunteers will undergo vaccine injections during the yearlong clinical trial, in Germany and Belgium, according to *Deutsche Welle*, a German news organization.

The vaccine, known as tgAAC09, targets HIV subtype C, prevalent in Sub-Saharan African countries as well as India and China, according to the *Associated Press*.

Backed by Targeted Genetics Corporation and the non-profit Institutional AIDS Vaccine Initiative (IAVI), the trial will test the vaccine's safety and effectiveness, according to IAVI's Web site.

"I think ideally the research sounds great," said Ian Nelligan, senior biochemistry major. "However, I have some

doubts. I worry that they will not do enough testing and research before administering (the vaccine) widely."

AIDS continues to be a growing pandemic in developing nations.

Males born in some Sub-Saharan African countries have a 75 percent chance of being infected with HIV in their lifetime, according to James Petranka, biology professor.

It is very difficult to develop a vaccine for AIDS, according to Petranka.

"The problem with developing vaccines is a story in evolution because we've got a virus that can mutate rapidly,"

said Petranka. "Molecular studies trace the original HIV virus back to 1930. Since it's entered humans the virus has evolved into many different strains in the order of 15 to 20 minimum."

"This is just a race between the evolution of this thing and how quickly we can use our technology to track it and deal with it."

Currently, 30 other vaccines, besides tgAAC09, are being developed or tested worldwide, according to Jennifer Weemer, public relations officer for IAVI.

Vaccines consist of weakened (non-lethal) forms of viruses. Cells of the immune system recognize these as foreign invaders when the

vaccine is injected, and develop a cellular memory for the viral particle.

If a real infection occurs later, the immune system can use its memory to quickly attack the virus, according to Petranka.

"We deal with this every year with the flu vaccine, making new vaccines every year to keep pace with the evolving strain," said Petranka.

German researchers say the present vaccine, which has already been successfully tested on monkeys, has several advantages over other vaccines in the development phase, according to *Deutsche Welle*.

A single-shot of vaccine tgAAC09 would not require multiple injections over time, as is the case with other vaccines. This would be particularly useful for developing countries, where most new HIV infections occur, according to IAVI's Web site.

SEE VACCINE ON PAGE 12

U.S. misses Iraq deadline

AMANDA EDWARDS
Staff Reporter

The U.S. appointed Iraqi Governing Council did not meet the Feb. 28 deadline to approve an interim constitution due to major differences about the role of Islam in the law, rights of women, and the independence of the Kurdish minority.

"We have all agreed to a democratic Iraq," said a Governing Council member,

Mahmud Othman, according to The Associated Press. "We have agreed that the people should choose everything. They've never said they wanted an Islamic law, Islamic state. If it is delayed a bit nothing much will affect it because this is a deadline we put ourselves."

The United States set the Feb. 28 deadline and U.S. administrator in Iraq must approve the document.

SEE IRAQ ON PAGE 12



COURTESY OF JOHN STEVENS

Argentinean researchers, Roberto and Graciela Mercado assisted in MEDC research with students and faculty at UNCA. The MEDC provides information to the international scientific community field of Mössbauer spectroscopy. Currently, there are over 81,000 data records in the MEDC database.

International scientists visit UNCA

BY TERRI FISHER
Staff Reporter

The Mössbauer Effect Data Center (MEDC), John Stevens and UNCA received a visit in February from two Argentinean physicists.

Roberto and Graciela Mercator visited UNCA to have an intellectual exchange with students and anyone involved with the UNCA MEDC research center.

"We have made a major addition to our home with the idea that we can accommodate international visitors," said Stevens, a chemistry professor. "We are hoping to have someone come in next fall from Budapest Hungary."

Bringing international visitors to UNCA helps in extending ideas and expanding learning, as well as gives students a new voice on a small campus, according to Stevens.

"We decided about a year ago that we would be more proactive in terms of having scientists come and stay here for an extended period of time," said Stevens. "We want to make a more deliberate effort of inviting international colleagues."

"(Roberto Mercator) is in the area of Mössbauer spectroscopy, and he's the number one scientist in Argentina that does this type of research."

While visiting, the two educators supported the learning of those students who work with the MEDC.

"Both of them knew exactly what was going on and they worked very well with us in helping us understand the processes," said Michael Martin, a freshmen NCSU engineering major.

Others agree that working with the Argentinean researchers was beneficial.

"Working with Roberto and Graciela was a fantastic experience," said David Mabe, a biology chemistry student. "They were both in the laboratory working with me almost on a daily basis, asking questions and offering new insights and suggestions I certainly wouldn't have thought of."

The Mercators worked on about 20 different projects while they were here, according to Stevens.

In the future Stevens said he hopes that he will be able to have direct issues to address when inviting visiting professors.

"Here at UNCA we essentially have all the material collected using the Mössbauer technique," said Stevens.