

The Blue Banner



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NEWS BRIEFS

BY JAMES RICHARDS
Staff Reporter

CAMPUS CRIME

Campus Police received a call from a Mills Hall resident saying a room of unidentified people entered her room without her knowledge April 20. Campus Police are investigating the incident as a non-entry burglary.

Campus Police investigated an April 16 vandalism of a Housing Center behind Founders Hall. The Mazda's passenger window had been smashed with a cinder block.

Campus Police reported a forgery case on April 15 involving two unidentified residents. The case remains under investigation.

ASHEVILLE

The two finalists interviewed for Asheville police chief met with police officers Monday afternoon in a private session at the Asheville Civic Center.

City Manager Jim Westbrook will decide between Rocky Mount Police Chief William Hogan and Daniel, Md., Police Chief David Moore to replace retired Chief Will Marino.

MASSACHUSETTS

Even though he's out of the presidential race, John Edwards won North Carolina's first-ever statewide Democratic caucus.

Unofficial results from 100 precincts gave Edwards more than 50 percent of the total vote among registered candidates, according to the Associated Press.

Massachusetts Senator John Kerry was second with 27 percent.

The April 17 vote will determine which candidates get delegates for the Democratic National Convention.

MUCIGALPA, HONDURAS

Honduras announced April 19 it would withdraw its 370 soldiers from coalition forces in Iraq.

Honduras cited spiraling violence and pressure created by Spain's decision to remove its forces as reasons for leaving.

Spain commands troops in Iraq along with other Spanish-speaking nations in the coalition: Honduras, El Salvador, Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic, according to the Associated Press.

Stationed in central Iraq, Honduran soldiers performed peacekeeping duties including clearing mines and providing medical care.

IRAQ

After days of negotiation, the U.S.-led coalition in Iraq agreed April 19 to end the military standstill in Falluja, if civic leaders can persuade insurgents to turn in their weapons. Sporadic violence continues despite the fragile truce in Falluja, west of the Iraqi capital Baghdad.

President Bush announced April 19 he would nominate John Negroponte, now the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations as ambassador to Iraq when sovereignty is turned over to Iraqis June 30. The U.S. Senate must confirm the nomination.

An electronic processing service's computer malfunctions caused thousands of overcharged Wal-Mart customers nationwide who paid with Visa or Master Card.



MAX TAINTOR/PHOTO EDITOR

However, the Wal-Mart on Tunnel Road in Asheville (right) is yet to receive any reports from customers affected by the malfunction.

Malfunction overcharges Wal-Mart customers

A computer problems result in 800,00 overcharged transactions

BY TERRI FISHER
Staff Reporter

The electronic processing service, First Data Corp., encountered a computer malfunction that overcharged more than 800,000 transactions at Wal-Mart stores nationwide between March 31 and April 2.

Transactions were initially double or triple charged when customers used their debit or credit cards.

"Anyone who conducted a transaction with a Visa or MasterCard on March 31 should check their statements," said Staci Busby, spokesperson for First Data.

By April 19, the cause of the malfunction had not yet been identified, but the investigation continued, according to Busby.

"People need to check their bank and credit card statements regularly," said Busby. "We hope that the problem is cleared up so that nobody is overcharged and nothing shows up on their statements."

Wal-Mart employees were forewarned about the possible overcharging, according to Denita Gallion, a senior management student and Wal-Mart employee.

"The credit card issue began around March 31 and April 1. They sent the cashiers a notice saying that some customers may be over charged if they used a Visa or MasterCard," said Gallion.

"They said that it wasn't a Wal-Mart problem, that it was the credit card company. They also said that it wasn't only at Wal-Mart."

Immediately after the overcharges, First

Data opened a new fiscal week with stock prices actually rising. Greenwood Village-based First Data shares rose 24 cents on the Monday following the malfunction, to close at \$43.29 per share.

As one of the largest electronic commerce and payment services worldwide, First Data serves approximately 3.5 million merchant locations, 1,400 card issuers and millions of consumers, providing the ability to purchase goods using virtually any form of payment.

"Personally I don't know of any particular customers that were affected," said Gallion.

Representatives from the Wal-Mart on Tunnel Road were not able to say whether any of their customers were affected. Managers said they have no record of complaints.

Why Spain blamed the Basque

BY LAUREN ABE
Staff Reporter

After the bombing of commuter trains in Madrid in March, the Spanish government regarded the Basque terrorist group responsible, according to the *Economist*.

"When I heard about the bombing of the commuter trains in Madrid, I was scared it was the Basque," said Liz Laxague, a junior French major. "However, the people arrested have no connection to ETA."

The Basque are a group of Spanish people who live in the northern part of Spain and the southern part of France. In 1959, Basque activists against the Francisco Franco's dictatorship formed the ETA, which

stands for Euskadi ta Askatasuna, according to the Council on Foreign Relations.

"When two hundred people died in the March 11 train bombings, the Spanish government blamed it on the Basque," said John Gant, assistant professor of Spanish. "Most of the Spanish knew the Basque were not responsible for the bombings because the Basque never kill that many people at a time."

The ETA is the military wing of the Basque independence movement. It is considered a terrorist group as it resorts to kidnappings and bombings targeted at police forces and government officials in a pursuit for independence, according to the Council on Foreign Relations.

"The Spanish people knew that this is not how the Basque operated," said Gant. "The Spanish people re-

sented the president's actions, so they voted for the socialist party."

The Spanish government blamed the ETA for the train bombings. However, evidence surfaced indicating that an Islamic terrorist group, such as al-Qaeda, may be responsible for the attack, according to CNN.

"The terrorists attacked Madrid because the former president supported Bush and sent Spanish troops to Iraq," said Gant. "A lot of the other countries in Europe did not support Bush."

The newly elected Socialist



Liz Laxague



Tim Love
LAURA COWAN
STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

leader, Jose Luis Rodriguez Zapatero, criticized former Prime Minister Jose Maria Aznar's support for Bush and the war in Iraq and decided to pull the troops out of Iraq because coalition forces are not placed under U.N. control, according to CNN.

The historical Basque community consists of seven provinces, four in Spain and three in France. The Basque have their own language, culture, icons and heroes. Their goal is to unite under a com-



MAX TAINTOR/PHOTO EDITOR

UNCA held a meeting April 20 about plans to clear out the area near the corner of WT Weaver and Broadway (above) for a new parking lot. Many students and locals attended the meeting and shared their concerns about destroying the forested area.

UNCA proposes new parking lot

BY ADAM McMULLIN
Staff Reporter

Nearly 200 concerned students and UNCA neighbors met April 20 to discuss a parking lot the university proposes to build on school property near the corner of WT Weaver and Broadway.

"We're trying to solve some of our short term parking issues that are coming to a head," said Stephen Baxley, Director of Facilities

Management and planning at UNCA.

The University must address the lack of parking, due in part to construction, as soon as possible, according to Baxley.

"We also have the burden of success," said Baxley. "Last year we had the largest freshmen class and projections are still on to have a good size class this year and we're trying to get ahead of some of our parking prob-

U.N. inspectors investigate Iran

BY AMANDA EDWARDS
Staff Reporter

U.N. nuclear inspectors entered Iran April 12 after weeks of delay attempting to verify whether the country's nuclear program serves a legitimate purpose or if it is in position to create atomic weapons.

"The United Nations should be in there," said Joe Telegen, a junior creative writing major. "It is imperative that the United Nations know what weapons exist and where, but Iran should not be held up to a higher standard than countries that we have to try to get along with for political reasons. No one knows exactly what capabilities any of those countries have. Any country, including the United States, with nuclear capacities and an aggressive government is automatically a threat to the world."

A month ago, Iran barred inspectors after the United Nations' regulatory agency for nuclear issues, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), released a report stating that Iran had not lived up to its reporting requirements regarding the use of its nuclear program.

Iran's failure to report the material facilities and activities in question concerns U.N. inspectors most, according to the report.

Iran's IAEA Safeguard Agreement requires the country to provide the agency with information "concerning nuclear material subject to safeguards under the agreement and the features of facilities relevant to safeguarding such material."

Iran claims that they use their nuclear program solely for the production of energy, but uncertainties about Iran's program increased last year when the IAEA reported that inspectors found radioactive uranium particles that are enriched to a weapons-grade level, higher than what Iran requires to fuel a nuclear reactor. Enriched uranium can be used for either atomic energy or to make bombs.

"There is no room for error with atomic weapons," said John Mitchell, a senior history major. "If the world waits for these weapons to fall into the wrong hands, the consequences could be greater than we can conceive."

The U.N. team will be focusing the inspections on the Natanz Uranium Enrichment Plant and the Isfahan Nuclear Technology Center. A series of meetings with Iranian officials will also take place.

Earlier this year, Mohammed El Baradei, director of the IAEA, visited the Natanz facility and discovered that the plant had been equipped with 160 new gas centrifuges, according to an IAEA report. Centrifuges are rotating devices that can selectively separate

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