

Per LD 3916 .A12

UNCA PERIODICALS The Blue Banner LD3916 .A12 40:2

D. HOOK D.H.C.

The Blue Banner



SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE SINCE 1982

Volume 40 Issue 2

www.unca.edu/banner

September 9, 2004

NEWS BRIEFS

BY SARAH SCHMIDT Staff Reporter

CAMPUS CRIME

UNCA police investigated the vandalism of a Ramsey Library copy machine on Sept. 1, according to campus Police.

Campus Police received a call from Cindy Branton, director of printing services, who stated that someone tried to break into the copy machine money compartment. The incident had no witnesses, according to the report.

The person who attempted to pry open the door did not get the money compartment out, but caused \$100 in damages to the copier, according to police.

ASHEVILLE

UNCA students and faculty endured water supply contamination and the cancellation of the remaining week's classes Wednesday, as tropical depression Frances flooded numerous areas of Asheville.

Biltmore Village stood beneath three to four feet of water, on-campus students left for their native cities, and the newly opened Starbucks lay amidst a river of rainwater after the flooding. Gasoline and sewage polluted area water supplies, rivers, and freshwater tributaries, leading officials to speculate a water shortage of up to a week or more.

Local artisans are questioning the construction of a new visitor's center on the Blue Ridge Parkway that could draw tourists away from the nearby Folk Art Center, according to the Asheville Citizen-Times. "Nothing's a done deal," said Phil Noblitt, parkway spokesman. "(The craft guild) have been really great partners, and the last thing we want to do is somehow injure them.

Congress designated nearly \$1 million for the construction of the new visitor's center, and plans for the center include a digital theater, a marketing center for visitors to learn more about local attractions and a "mountain experience center," according to the Citizen-Times.

NATIONAL

National opinion polls show that President Bush is ahead of Democratic candidate John Kerry, 52 percent to 41 percent after the Republican National Convention, according to the Associated Press.

Time magazine completed its poll of 926 likely voters on Sept. 2, and has a sampling margin of error of plus or minus four points, according to the Associated Press. Historically, post-convention bounces can last only a short time, or foreshadow a longer-lasting bounce, according to the AP.

IRAQ

Iraq's government confirmed that the man captured after a shootout in Tikrit is not Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, the former top aide to Saddam Hussein, according to the British Broadcasting Company.

According to Sabah Kahdim, interior ministry spokesman, the

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UNCA students fuel local economy

BY RHEANNON YOKEYLEY Staff Reporter

This year the city of Asheville may thank UNCA for the number of new freshmen and returning students it will bring into the local economy. A total of 707 new freshmen join 2,295 returning and continuing education students, according to the UNCA Office of Institutional Research Preliminary Census Data Published Sept. 1.

In the fall of 2003, UNCA had 599 new freshmen and 2,119 returning and continuing education students. The addition of parking lots, the new Highsmith University Union and a growing number of faculty parking areas around campus are physical signs of a growing university.

"Students return to UNCA because of its intimate learning environment," said David Squires, a junior interdisciplinary student. "You get a lot of personal attention because it's a small school."

Even though the sight of students circling parking lots in search of an open space may seem disheartening, local business owners see this as a sign of higher profits. Students assist the local economy by utilizing all of the amenities the city has to offer. Asheville offers any kind of food you can imagine and almost endless entertainment options, along with the natural beauty of the area.

Restaurants, gas stations, rental agencies, movie theatres, clothing



BRIAN DAVIS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

New and returning UNCA students spend money at local shops, cafes, restaurants and video stores. David Squires, a junior interdisciplinary major show that college students boost the local economy and provide a good source of labor.

stores and bars are just a few of the recipients of the money students spend in the local area within this school year. From August until May every school year students pour their money into local businesses of all kinds.

"UNCA students have a disposable income to go out to eat, but they are also contributing to the

local housing market," said Chad Bright, co-owner of Urban Burrito on Merrimon Avenue. "Students definitely have a huge impact on the economy in Asheville."

Students provide a source for cheap labor, helping businesses to maximize their income while providing students with spending money.

"We haven't heard anything negative about the number of students coming to the area," said Bright. "There's nothing negative period. I can't imagine how anyone could complain, unless it was about the traffic or something. The benefits far outweigh anything I could see as negative."

UNCA's growing size year after

year causes the area to constantly expand in order to meet all of the needs and wants of the students. The almost guaranteed customer base makes very few think twice about opening a new business near the UNCA campus.

"You get a little bit more business, but it broadens your day out. When they're not in school you get a lunch rush and the dinner rush. When they're in session you get busy all day long," said Bright. "I would say anywhere around 20% busier when classes are in session."

Asheville is a unique area filled with large chain corporations, as well as small, independent businesses. This makes for a very diverse marketplace giving students many options for whatever their needs may be.

With all of the options in Asheville, the student population stands out as a viable audience for advertising. Segrof, an independent video store, sits on Charlotte Street in North Asheville. As a small business, Segrof must compete with larger chains for the student business.

"I certainly see a lot of students come in, but I wouldn't say they are the majority of our customers, but certainly we do better with them and we advertise to them on campus," said Squires. "I assume students have some effect on the local economy, but I don't think the student population at UNCA is that large a portion of the general

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UNCA students question school policy on alcohol consumption

BY SEAN ROBINSON Staff Reporter

Some students feel the university's policy on consumption of alcohol by a minor is unfair and should be amended, according to UNCA students Russell Johnson and Edwin Terrell.

As in the case of Johnson, underage persons can be charged with possession of alcohol without even having a container of beer anywhere near them, according to Sergeant Jerry Adams of UNCA Campus Police.

"In terms of possession, it can be either physical possession, as in holding it, or it can be inside their body also," said Adams. "We consider (alcohol) in the bloodstream as possession, also."

Contrary to what many believe to be school policy, police can charge a student with possession in this case without even administering a Breathalyzer, said Adams.

"We do Breathalyzer tests, but we also go by odor or apparent physical impairment of a person, either by field sobriety test or something like that," said Adams.

Johnson, an undeclared freshman, was charged with misdemeanor possession of a malt beverage on Aug. 25, the same night junior pre-law student Terrell was given a Student Conduct Citation

for underage possession and consumption.

"I owe 125 bucks in court fees," said Johnson. The charge against him was written as a State Citation, carrying the penalties of a misdemeanor, according to police.

Johnson must attend court at the Buncombe County Courthouse on Oct. 10 to await a trial and possible sentencing for this charge, said Johnson.

Student Conduct Citations carry far less severe penalties, said Terrell.

"I have to do community service, I have to go to alcohol counseling and I have a student conduct meeting with an administrator," said Terrell.

On the night in question, four individuals, including a man over age 21, were present in the Mills Hall suite and of the three underage students, only Johnson was not given a Breathalyzer test, according to the police report.

The students were cooperative and allowed police to enter the suite and search Terrell and Johnson's room. Police administered a Breathalyzer test on Terrell and one

other student. The other student blew a 0.018, while Terrell tested positive with a 0.16 blood alcohol content, said the report.

Police did not charge the person over 21 with aiding and abetting a minor, even though the man claimed responsibility for the alcohol in the room, said Johnson and Terrell.

This oddity stands in stark contrast to the school's policy on the matter.

According to Section 8.1-E of the UNCA Student Handbook, "Any person who is over the lawful age to purchase and who aids or abets another in violation of purchase shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$2000 or imprisonment for not more than two years, or both."

Public safety officers did not seize the alcohol in the room, nor had it even been opened, said Johnson.

"(The beer) was closed and in a bag," said Johnson. "The cops never saw the beer."

The police report does not re-

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BRIAN DAVIS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Russell Johnson, an undeclared freshman, disagrees with the policy of Campus Police regarding student consumption of alcohol.



BRIAN DAVIS/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Edwin Terrell, a junior history major, was present on the night of Johnson's arrest and agrees that police had no grounds for their charges.