

The Blue Banner



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NEWS BRIEFS

by Angele Mainhart
Staff Reporter

Campus Crime

Campus Police took two students to the Buncombe County Detention Facility, according to Campus Police. Officials held the students on \$1000 bonds after Campus Police searched their dorm, finding several bags of mushrooms, liquor, hydrocodone and marijuana Feb. 3, according to the police report.

These events occurred after a student told a supervisor at the Market he had a gun when the supervisor refused to return his One Card. The student's roommate tried to use the One Card prior to the incident, according to the police report.

State

Officials demoted a female member of the National Guard Military Police Unit from sergeant for indecent exposure during a mud-wrestling party in the AP.

The 105th unit from Asheville started a party at Camp Bucca after replacing the 90th unit from Florida. Officials demoted Deanna Allen, 19, from specialist to private first class, but she remains a sergeant at the camp. Several spectators from her unit received counseling, according to the AP.

A thrift store customer discovered \$1,227 in the pocket of a shirt she wanted to purchase at a Pam Pretty consignment shop in Hickory Feb. 4. Carol Wolfe handed the money over to the owner of the store who then returned it to the original owner.

Motion

Officials charged a woman with capital murder for the deaths of her three children in Huntsville, Ala. Feb. 5, 2004. Nathshay Yvonne Ward admitted to starving her children to death.

Relatives and workers from the Alabama Department of Human Resources tried to visit the home several times before, but Ward refused to allow them in. The officers found the bodies several days after the children died.

Officials captured a couple accused of abusing and starving five adopted children in Utah Feb. 4. Linda and John Dollars of Tampa abused five of their seven adopted children.

They beat the children with electric shock, beatings with hammers and pulling out their toenails with pliers.

The Dollars favored the other two children, who remained unharmed, according to the AP.

The Department of Children's Services began investigating the Dollars after an ambulance rushed one of the children to the hospital with severe injuries Jan. 21.

The couple adopted the children in the '90s, and Linda home-schooled them. Officials searched the Dollars with warrants for felony aggravated child

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Locals protest off-campus student housing project

by Sarah Schmidt
Staff Reporter

Montford residents protest an off-campus student housing complex after discovering the construction company violated its zoning permit by clearing land that residents used as a buffer.

"People in Montford have expressed concern that the city council doesn't really care what happens to Montford," said Dee Eggers, environmental studies professor and Montford resident. "Montford residents are hopeful that the city council will push for some kind of solution and not just let the developers break their word to council."

Campus Crest, the developers building "The Grove" student apartments at the corner of Zillicoa Street and Montford Avenue, violated their permit when they cleared too much vegetation from the property borders. The permit, issued by the Asheville City Council, required developers to keep a 15-foot buffer of trees and bushes around most of the property.

"During the city council meeting, there was a statement made by the developer that the existing vegetation on the border would remain untouched for a depth of roughly 80 feet," said Scott Shuford,



CHRIS BUBENIK/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

This Montford resident posted signs of protest for the Campus Crest construction site.

Asheville Planning Director

"When they got onto the site after that meeting, they ended up having some topographic challenges in terms of where the buildings were located and where the site was that they did not anticipate. This made them unilaterally decide that they wanted to encroach into that buffer."

Once the council learned of the violation, they spoke at a public work session with Shuford about what the developers could do. Shuford and the council said that, with the damage already done, the Campus Crest developers should meet with Montford residents to decide what the developers could do to minimize the impact on the community.

Eggers and another Montford representative spoke with developers and city planners about negotiating options for the community. "What the community is going

"It will probably affect Reed Creek and the river."

Dee Eggers
professor of environmental studies

to do is talk about what we would like the city council to require the developer to do as a way of mitigating the negative impact of the loss of that buffer," said Eggers.

In addition to this, the council required the Campus Crest developers to replant the buffer to the original permit specification of 15 feet. In response, the developers put in several fast-growing evergreens and will add more when

spring arrives.

"In trying to figure out if there had been a violation at this point, we looked at what some of the discussion was at this meeting, and it basically said that there would be a complete visual barrier between Montford Avenue and the buildings on the site," said Shuford.

Although this project affects students, UNCA maintains a neutral position. Though the student population continues to grow and the university considers building new dormitories, UNCA neither contracted with Campus Crest nor became involved in the buffer dispute.

"The university does not have a position on the buffer situation," said Nancy Williams, director of Housing and Student Life. "It sounds like there are plenty of positions without ours being added

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UNCA alumna sells her skin on eBay

by Leah Shellberg
Staff Reporter

A UNCA alumna auctioned her body as advertising space to protest the American legal system and pay court fines.

"It was more of a statement and then it kind of blew up into a huge publicity event," said Bowen. "You have to prostitute yourself out in a manner of speaking, because there is no other recourse."

Officials charged Jenny Bowen, former student body president and vice president, Board of Trustees member and current AmeriCorps volunteer at Albright College, with purchasing alcohol for a minor.

Bowen attempted to auction her body as advertising space for a month in order to cover the \$1,700 in court fees, but mostly as a protest, as her yearly stipend from AmeriCorps was not enough to cover the court fines and her yearly cost of living.

"You can't get another job (while working for AmeriCorps). The socioeconomic base of these fines versus your income makes it impossible for you to pay the legal fees."

Bowen's statement caught the eye of producers of the Larry Elder Show, who asked Bowen to fly to Los Angeles Feb. 9 to film a show.

"The Larry Elder Show called me up a couple nights ago," said Bowen. "First, they didn't actually tell me who they were. I thought it was just somebody that was interested in actually being a bidder and wanted to make sure the story was legit. So, they talked to me for about 10 minutes and asked me all kinds of questions.

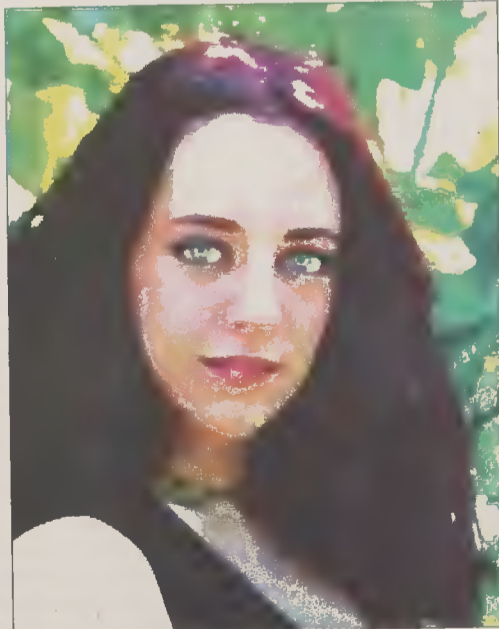


PHOTO COURTESY OF JENNY BOWEN

UNCA alumna Jenny Bowen wanted to sell her skin on eBay for ad space to pay for court fees.

I told them the whole story."

Bowen spoke with the Larry Elder Show producers, answering every question about her story. The producers then offered to pay for her to go to Los Angeles and tape the show.

Reactions posted on the auction page ranged from requests for pictures of Bowen's body to accusations that her story, which she posted on the auction page, was untrue. One man posted

if they had the money to bid, they would have Bowen advertise the fact that she supplied an underage person with alcohol.

"I think that if there's any justice in this world, eBay should be putting money towards her auction to pay her to advertise for eBay on her body," said Leo Klausmann, senior environmental studies student.

More than 21,000 people viewed the auction, and five days of bidding remained. The auction ended with nine bids. Christopher Summerville, Bowen's friend and a UNCA alumnus won the highest bid of \$100.

"Jenny is a very intelligent young lady who had a moment of weakness," said Summerville. "It happens to everyone because no one is perfect."

Summerville said he bid because of his friendship with Bowen, and he hoped to get the auction going so she could raise the money she needed.

"It was me making a statement about the fact that America, or the western world, has come to the point where we are prostituting off parts of our bodies for mass media and capitalism," said Bowen. "But it's also about the fact that the legal system got out of control, and I dedicate my entire life to personal service and civic service, making a difference in people's lives. I made a mistake. I bought a 20-year-old beer. I think it just got out of control."

UNCA students seemed more impressed with Bowen's attempt to raise money for the court fines and not as concerned about the charges.

Crystal Rattazzi, senior multimedia arts and science student, expressed interest in Bowen's

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Iraqi voter turnout increases

by Justin Wagner
Staff Reporter

Shiite Muslims succeeded the country's new national assembly with high Iraqi voter turnout during the Jan. 30 elections.

Insurgent attacks claimed the lives of at least 50 Iraqis despite initial predictions of more widespread violence on voting day.

"What I saw was a remarkably high turnout, which suggests the passing of legitimacy the establishment of a legitimate government," said William Sabo, political science professor.

Initial election results indicated that the United Iraqi Alliance, a coalition of Shiite political groups, gained 72 percent of the recorded votes.

The Iraqi List, a Shiite-dominated coalition headed by current Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, placed second with 18 percent.

Certain UNCA students believe the elections will lead to positive developments in Iraq, despite reservations about remaining religious and ethnic divisions in the country.

"I strongly believe that the Iraqi elections are a step in the right direction, albeit a very small one," said John Post, sophomore history student.

"It will be a long time, though, before any legitimate government takes power. If the Sunnis voted in larger numbers, I'd probably feel better about the situation," Post said.

Sunni Muslims, a minority that held privileged status under Saddam Hussein's regime, turned out in far fewer numbers at the polls.

Most analysts attribute this to Sunni voter apathy, instability or threats of violence against voters in Sunni-populated insurgent strongholds in northern and central Iraq, according to an article in the *New York Times*.

Some students question the process of the Iraqi elections taking place under the backdrop of threatened ethnic and religious violence.

"The gift of democracy hardly allows the Iraqis to build a national consciousness that isn't at once shot through with sectarian violence," said Matthew Wheatley, junior literature student. "It's all a sham."

Nine suicide bombers died in attacks during election day as sporadic violence persisted throughout the country.

Security forces in Iraq, however, managed to avert the type of large-scale violence against voters that Islamic militants, such as, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, called for during the weeks preceding the elections.

Most observers hope that violence will decline in the aftermath of the elections, although

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