

The Blue



Banner

SERVING THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE SINCE 1982

Volume 41, Issue 8

www.unca.edu/banner

March 31, 2005

NEWS BRIEFS

by Leah Shellberg
Staff Reporter

Campus Crime

Campus Police arrested a man on drug possession and issued a DWI in the State Employee's Credit Union parking lot off of Broadway Avenue on March 27. Campus Police saw Kevin Sexton, 23, from Granger, IN circling the parking lot on Founders Drive and then speeding onto W.T. Weaver Boulevard.

Police followed Sexton as he made a right onto Broadway Avenue and then pulled Sexton into the State Employee's Credit Union lot. Upon approaching the vehicle, police observed a strong odor of alcohol.

Police searched the vehicle and found marijuana and drug paraphernalia. Sexton consented to an Alco-Sensor test and registered a 0.17.

His passenger, John Mramer, was also under the influence of alcohol, but was not arrested. The officers towed the vehicle and took Sexton to the Buncombe County Detention Center, where they held him on a \$600 bond.

State

North Carolina's stance on the lottery may be changing.

Speaker of the House Jim Black said he intends to submit legislation for a state lottery.

North Carolina is one of only 10 states in the United States that does not support government-run gambling.

Nation

Terri Schiavo received part of Holy communion on Easter Sunday.

Hospice priest Rev. Joseph Braun placed a drop of wine on Schiavo's tongue, but could not administer the bread because her mouth was dry. Schiavo's husband Michael did not agree with her parents' request for her to receive communion.

The announcement that Schiavo received communion drew cheers from the crowd of activists, who have been outside the hospice since Florida courts upheld the request for the removal of Schiavo's feeding tube.

Johnnie Cochran, Jr., famed attorney from the O.J. Simpson trial, died March 29. Cochran died of brain cancer, in his home, at age 67.

World

Countries bordering the Indian Ocean received tsunami alerts due to an 8.2 earthquake March 28.

The quake could cause a "widely destructive tsunami," according to the U.S. Pacific Tsunami Warning Center.

The epicenter of the quake was located approximately 125 miles offshore from the Indonesian island Sumatra, which suffered damages from the December tsunami.

The center does not have tide gauges in the Indian Ocean and does not know whether an actual tsunami was generated as of yet.

The quake happened around

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Funding improves UNCA research projects

by Justin Wagner
Staff Reporter

A local science education outreach program received \$1 million in federal funding. Republican Rep. Charles Taylor, lobbied for the money to expand local technology opportunities, said a UNCA physics student.

"He wants to bring more engineers to Western North Carolina," said Andrew Nicholson, senior physics student who conducted research at the Pisgah Astronomical Research Institute. "I would assume that means more big companies coming to Western North Carolina, so I guess he wants more of a high-tech job force."

Taylor secured the money, which will allow the Pisgah Astronomical Research and Science Education Center to expand educational outreach programs and increase research opportunities for students, faculty and researchers throughout the UNC system.

This will influence economies in the region because "ultimately it makes the area more congenial to technology," according to Brian Dennison, physics professor.

The bill also allocates funding to PARI, which will allow the facility to improve research equipment. The institute, located 35 miles southwest of Asheville, is a research setting for astronomers and physicists hoping to pursue more intimate, long-term projects, according to Dennison.

"There are things you can do there that you just can't do anywhere else," said Dennison. "Students who go out there are going to get hands-on exposure."

Most astronomical research facilities in the United States deal with researchers throughout the

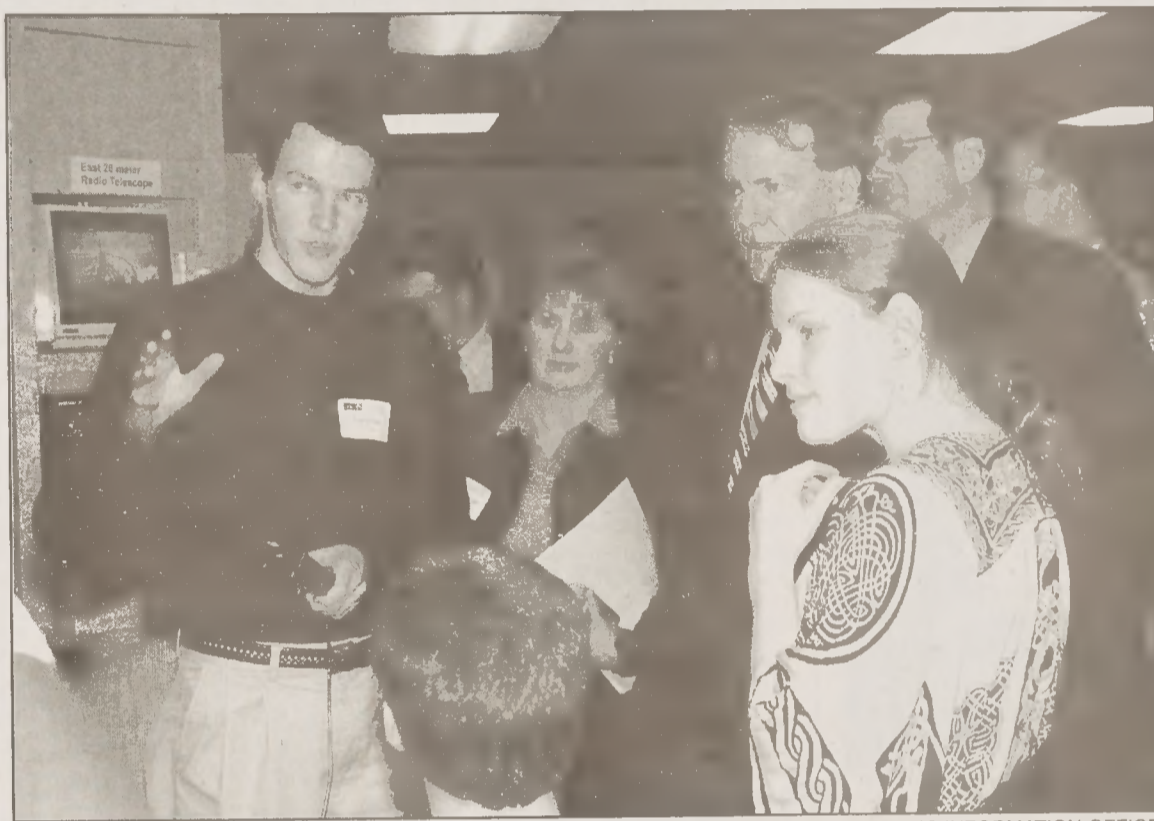


PHOTO COURTESY OF UNCA PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE

Chuck Fultz, senior physics student, explains his research. The money will allow the Pisgah Astronomical Research and Science Education to expand programs and research for students.

country and world and allow 30-40 hours of research at a time, according to Dennison.

The combination of increased access and advanced research equipment displayed by PARI is available at only a few places, such as MIT or Cal Tech, according to Dennison.

Certain projects undertaken by researchers at PARI require a level of sustained commitment that is impossible for researchers at more crowded observatories to achieve, according to Dennison.

"There are some projects that just can't be done that way because they require daily obser-

ations for years," said Dennison. "Students who work out there get hands-on experience, and they don't get that at national radio observatories, because they're doling out time to hundreds of users who come in and expect everything to work."

National radio observatories also often have less equipment in addition to allowing less research time, according to Dennison.

"There is very little chance for students to be trained in the instrumentation, so there are people who get Ph.D.s in radio astronomy and have never really touched the equipment," said Dennison.

Aside from emphasizing applied research, PARI also encourages local involvement in the form of students, faculty, researchers and community members.

"It's not just an isolated research institution," said Dennison. "The mission of PARSEC and the mission of PARI is very much oriented towards getting a lot of people involved."

Researchers at PARI, including certain UNCA students, work to enhance science education awareness and involvement through interactive equipment directed

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Police arrest students for Highsmith arson

by Leah Shellberg
Staff Reporter

Campus Police handled an arson incident outside Highsmith University Union on Feb. 27.

The incident began just after midnight. Sgt. Jerry Adams witnessed Eli Banikazemi, 19, and Michael Higgins, 19, setting fire to a large stack of napkins against the rear wall of the Highsmith University Union.

Banikazemi and Higgins ran when they saw Adams.

Adams followed and ordered them to stop and requested assistance from the Woodfin Police Department. Banikazemi and Higgins ran into Mills Hall, where UNCA Security Officer John Huffstickler, Woodfin Police Officer Michael Dykes and an officer from the Asheville Police Department came to help Adams search the building, and were unable to locate Banikazemi and Higgins. Officer Huffstickler extinguished the fire.

Adams interviewed Banikazemi at the Campus Police office in Vance Hall on Feb. 28. Banikazemi denied knowing anything about it, and said he was in Mills Hall during the time of the fire, according to the police report. Banikazemi gave the names of four friends of his that could verify his alibi. Adams contacted them, and two of them said they had not seen Banikazemi until later that afternoon. Banikazemi also gave Higgins' name, and Higgins told Adams that he spent time with Banikazemi the night of the incident.

During the interview, Higgins admitted that he and Banikazemi were responsible for setting the fire. Adams took Higgins to see Banikazemi, and he finally admitted.

On March 2, Campus Police obtained arrest warrants for Higgins and Banikazemi, and transported both to the Buncombe County Detention Center for processing. Police



TYLER BREAUX/PHOTO EDITOR

Olivia Humphrey, undeclared freshman and Amanda Baranski, undeclared junior, talk in front of Highsmith University Union where an arson incident occurred Feb. 27.

charged them with burning of a schoolhouse and resisting/obstructing a police officer.

UNCA students expressed mixed feelings about the incident, and how Campus Police dealt with it.

Mary Gwen Kistler, undeclared freshman, said she believes officials gave the correct punishment to Higgins and Banikazemi.

"I think the guys who did it were stupid for doing it in the first place, and I think they kind of deserved what was coming to them," said Kistler. "That's me, but it's the truth: If you're going to do something stupid, you've got to deal with the consequences."

Hilary Gibson, undeclared freshman said she doesn't think police should have made such a

big deal of the incident.

"It's ridiculous and trivial, considering that it was done outside and at nighttime, and it was just a mere pile of napkins. I just don't see it as a big threat or anything. Arson, to me, is a completely different definition," said Gibson. "I think arson is a major attempt to intentionally burn something down or destructively burn something."

Kimberly Hersey, undeclared freshman, expressed disapproval for their punishment.

"Really, it wasn't arson. They didn't burn anything down," said Hersey. "Everything was fine. There weren't even really scorch marks or anything like that on the building."

Grad center moves to UNCA

by Angele Mainhart
Staff Reporter

The Asheville graduate center administration will move to UNCA's campus July 1, but students will not really notice much of a change, according to the associate vice chancellor for academic and student affairs.

"The graduate center is here already on campus, and, for the most part, I don't think people will notice any particular changes at all," said Pat McClellan, associate vice chancellor for academic and student affairs.

"It's sort of the administrative oversight of the office. The director of the Asheville graduate center has been reporting to and was sort of overseen by the office of the president over in Chapel Hill. So, the administrative oversight is changing to UNCA."

Once the graduate center administration shifts to UNCA, it will probably make it easier to add more graduate programs, according to Don Locke, director of the Asheville graduate center.

"As it is now, this office is not a part of UNCA. It's just housed here," said Locke. Once it becomes a part of this, the infrastructure that exists for education in general at UNCA can be applied to the graduate center, and it will likely provide a more seamless process for implementing additional graduate programs."

In order to create a new graduate program, a significant number of people must show interest in the program. More than a few people must show interest before further work is done to create the program, according to Locke.

"When you come in and say, 'We need to have a masters program in veterinary medicine,' I would say, 'OK, what I need is a significant number of people to communicate to me that they are also interested, and it's not just you,'" said Locke.

"Once I get that body of information through affiliated organizations then I would develop a needs assessment and send it out to people to determine their real interests so that it isn't just one person."

Usually one out of every four people that show interest will actually enroll in the program. The number of people who show interest must be about four times what it would take to fill a class, according to Locke.

"So, if you want to get a class of 20, you have to get 80 people to express their interest to assume that we would get 20 people who would ultimately apply to the program. It's a fairly complex process. I suspect that UNCA, upon its assumption of leadership of this center, will do something similar to determine the needs before implementing the programs."

Once more graduate programs

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