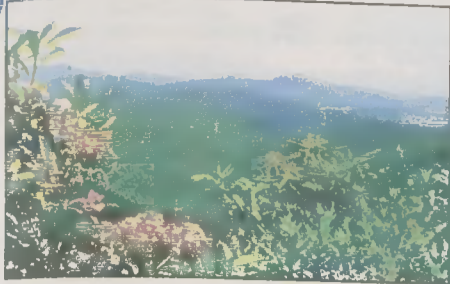


Various religions practiced in Asheville each have their own truth.

Seeking the truth



SEE LIFESTYLES 9

The Blue Banner

Coffeehouse relocates, adding new menu and a dance floor.



SEE ENTERTAINMENT 5

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November 16, 2006

New homes destroy mountains

By Anna Lee
STAFF WRITER

North Carolina has lost a million acres of forest in the last 10 years, about the size of Buncombe, Yancey and Madison Counties combined, a representative of Environmental Defense told an audience in Alumni Hall last Thursday.

"They're doing what we're now calling radical development, and I think that's a good term for it, because we're talking 800 to 1,000 homes on steep slopes that spill down into the Laurel Valley," said Gary Davis, attorney representing the Laurel Valley Watch, a group fighting development in a Madison County rural community.

The development also includes a jet airport and a sewage treatment plant that will put 3,000 gallons of treated sewage into a small trout stream, according to Davis.

"If everything goes well all the time, it might be OK for the trout, but it rarely happens that way at sewage treatment plants, particularly small privately owned ones like this," Davis said.

Development has caused Laurel Valley residents to worry about the water in their wells.

"The developer put 1,000 homes on the mountain. Hyeec's going to dig 1,000 wells for 1,000 homes," said Steve Crimi, Laurel Valley resident. "What's going to happen to everyone's water table, because everyone gets spring-fed water? We're very afraid that this will mess with everyone's individual ability to have water."

A recent article in the Asheville Citizen-Times quoted people who claimed the development is "environmentally responsible," according to Crimi.

"I was so mad I was seeing white," Crimi said. "How do you tear apart a mountain and call it green? How do you pollute a trout stream and call it green? How do you have sediment running down onto people's homes and call it green?"

North Carolina's Mountain Ridge Protection Act, enacted in 1983, applies to ridge development, but it only limits buildings over a certain height. This makes it useless in the case of limiting things like the Wolf Ridge development, according to Davis.

SEE DEVELOPMENT PAGE 3

Activist attacks urban education

By Ben Smith
STAFF WRITER

Jonathan Kozol, author, teacher, activist and target of right-wing pundits, denounced the failure of the American public school system to a packed Lipinsky Hall last Wednesday. Kozol's newest work, "Shame of the Nation," examines the sweeping regression of the school system back to the pre-Brown v. Board of Education days of separate and unequal.

"In New York, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Boston, cities on the west coast and some southern cities as well, we've pretty much ripped apart everything that Dr. King died for and trampled on the legacy of Brown v. Board of Education," Kozol said. "At the same time, we don't have the courage to say so."

The speech was part of an extensive day in Asheville for Kozol, including a lunch with students at the dining hall, a question and answer session and a tour of Asheville public schools.

He published his first book, "Death at an Early Age," in 1968 and since then, has been a major national critic of the public school system. In writing and speech, he is a passionate liberal, adamantly opposing Bush's No Child Left Behind Act, vouchers and charter schools.

"The tests that No Child Left Behind mandates, starting in third grade and every year after, are useless to our teachers," Kozol said.

In "Shame of the Nation," Kozol describes the vicious cycle that closing public schools failing to meet testing standards leads to. Schools in under-funded districts that fall short in testing standards are closed and students are dispersed to other schools within the district, straining other poorly funded schools with influxes of



WILL KETCHAM - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Jonathan Kozol, author of "Shame of the Nation," gave a speech Nov. 8, urging others to examine what he sees as a nation hurtling toward a resegregation of race in the school system.

failing students.

"My own true belief is that this testing was never intended to improve the quality of education in our schools," Kozol said. "I think it was intended as a shaming ritual."

Kozol further described the process that has transformed progress in American schools after the Civil Rights Movement to the overwhelming inner-city segregation that exists today.

"Our nation has reverted, at least right now, to sweeping resegregation," Kozol said. "Where you are increasingly seeing the most exciting integration programs reversed

by federal court order and turned back to the old Jim Crow system."

In "Shame of the Nation," Kozol sites staggering examples of segregation from 60 schools in 11 states he visited while researching for the book. In Los Angeles, Martin Luther King High is 99 percent black and Hispanic. Martin Luther High in Philadelphia is 98 percent black. Inner city schools are juxtaposed against northern suburban schools, which are often almost exclusively white and receive significantly more funding, according to Kozol.

Charlotte city schools were cited in "Shame of the Nation" as a par-

ticularly troubling example of segregation.

"I'm going back to Charlotte to teach, which is one of the most segregated school systems in America," said Linda Simthong, senior literature student. "Kozol advised me to keep strong and determined. It's good advice. I fear losing myself because I care so much, but the only ones who are going to make any change are the ones who know the reality of the injustices in the education system."

Despite the serious nature of his work, Kozol charmed the crowd by cracking jokes at the expense of

the Bush administration, former liberal activists and even himself. When speaking about the children he has written about and befriended, Kozol put on a playful voice and excitedly recounted stories of his subjects.

"I came in expecting a very academic speech, so I surprised when he started telling all of these personal stories," said Jason Tuell, junior student and member of the Student Diversity Alliance. "But I think it really helped to put a face on an issue that a lot of times is kept really sterile. I loved the lecture."

Kozol opened up his emotional side to the crowd, lamenting the death of the famed television personality Mr. Rogers and his own mother, who died just 10 days before at the age of 103. He touched on the pain he felt from personal attacks from conservatives. Bernard Goldberg, right-wing pundit, ranked Kozol No. 9 in his book "The 100 People Who Are Screwing Up America."

"The shrewd, rather mean debaters you see on TV a lot, on FOX television structure their arguments with surgical efficiency," Kozol said. "I'm often the target for these debates, because I'm often the only liberal on the TV program. They're really brutal, and they attack me in anyway imaginable. It hurts, too. I'm not a tough guy, as you can see."

The reaction to the speech was overwhelmingly positive. UNC Asheville students, as well as Asheville city school employees, attended the speech and found it revealing of the current situation.

"I thought it was interesting, but I wanted to hear some more about education," said Annette Joan. "I grew up and taught in the Bronx, so I see a lot of these problems."

Shuler wins, able to reach voters from both parties

By Christa Chappelle
STAFF WRITER

Students and professors express confidence in Rep.-elect Heath Shuler's leadership abilities, despite having less experience than his Republican predecessor Charles Taylor.

"I was so excited on election night when Charles Taylor conceded," said Olivia Fisher, junior psychology student who worked on the Democratic campaign. "There were a lot of wins that night, a lot of optimism and relief. There is too much corruption in Washington, and a man who has never served in office is a welcome change."

A total of 230, 637 voters filled

out ballots last Tuesday. Former NFL quarterback and real estate investor Heath Shuler won 54 percent of the votes in U.S. House District 11, where a majority of the Western North Carolina counties fall. Taylor won 46 percent of the votes, according to the Buncombe County Board of Elections. Shuler will enter office in January, ending Taylor's 16 years as representative for WNC.

The Democrats won a total of 33 seats in the House of Representatives and now have the majority, with Nancy Pelosi of California serving as the Speaker of the House. In addition, Democrats now control the Senate with 51 seats.



Heath Shuler
Congressman

Although incumbents often win congressional races, Shuler possessed the right ingredients for a successful race, according to Bill Sabo, professor of political science. Shuler had name recogni-

tion, raised a large amount of money and his conservative stance on social issues and liberal stance on the economy reflected Western North Carolina values, Sabo said.

Due to his stances on social and economical issues, Shuler attracted both Democrats and Republicans, according to Fisher.

"Heath Shuler is a great balance," Fisher said. "He is socially conservative, which appeals to the traditionally Republican base, but he is also a strong Democratic candidate in terms of the economy, healthcare, the environment and the war in Iraq. He was able to appeal to both ends of the spectrum."

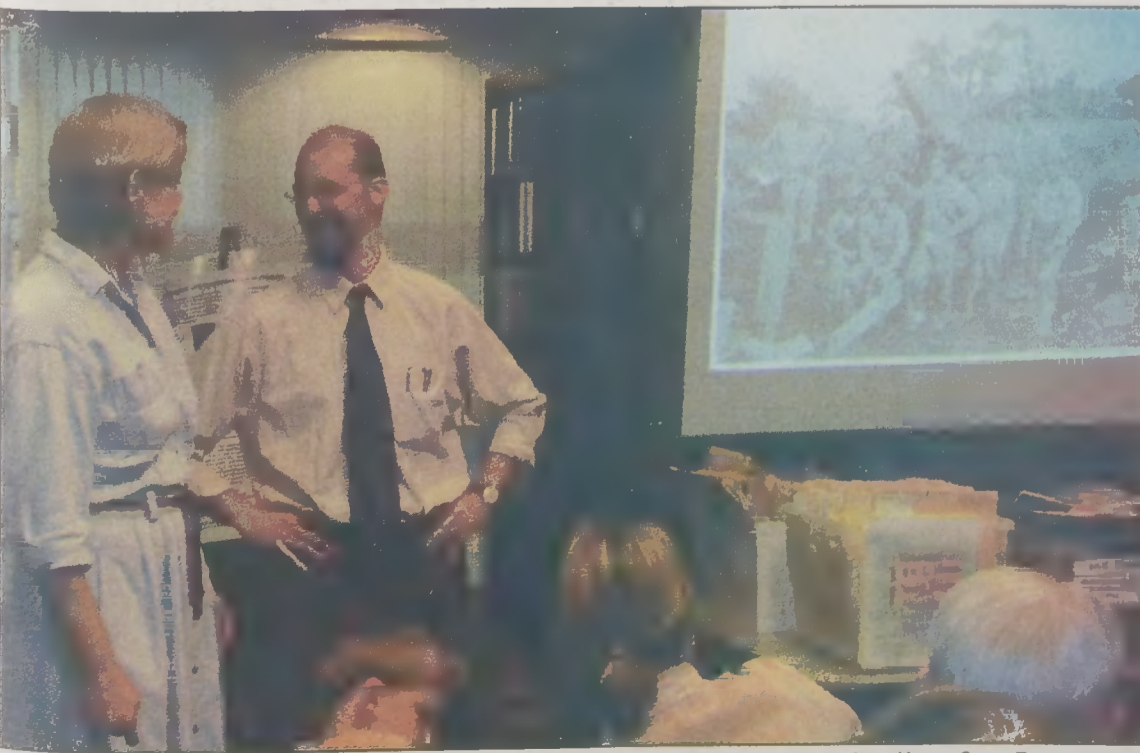
Due to his moderate beliefs, Shuler attracted the Western North Carolina community by holding similar values, according to Keith Redmon, senior student.

"I think he'll do okay," Redmon said. "He seems to be more conservative and hold more of the kind of values that Western North Carolina people who are native to this area normally hold."

Candidates for the House of Representatives have the ability to fit their platforms closely to the beliefs of their constituents unlike presidential and senatorial elections, according to Sabo.

"House members come from

SEE DEMOCRATS PAGE 2



ABBY KENT - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Literature Professor Peg Downes talks with Reid Chapman, co-author of documents chronicling stories told by the veterans and civilians of World War II, after the authors dedicated the works to the university.

WWII veteran and civilian stories bring the past to life

By Justin Wagner
GUEST WRITER

After spearheading efforts to interview more than 100 World War II veterans and civilians from WNC, two UNC Asheville faculty members gave the completed documents chronicling the lives and stories of survivors to the university.

"It was two years after 9/11, and there were a number of anniversaries having to do with World War II," said Deborah Miles, director of the Center for Diversity Education. "There is a lot to learn from old soldiers and the folks back home: the men, women and children who had some hand in the support of the war effort."

Miles and UNC Asheville lecturer Reid Chapman exhibited their

work in "World War II Mountain Memories: Home Front to the Frontline," the display opened at UNC Asheville in 2003.

"We wanted to do it for contemporary reasons to educate kids," Miles said. "Almost everyone we interviewed talked about World War II as the war to end all wars, and suddenly, we are involved in war again."

The archive collection worked to engage students from middle and high schools already studying World War II, according to Miles.

"Kids study World War II in North Carolina from sixth through 11th grade," Miles said. "We gear it toward high school students."

Students and the public can view the archive through Ramsey Library's special collections, and it

is also available on the library's website, according to Helen Wykle, UNC Asheville special collections librarian.

"It's a fairly standard special collections in that it contains manuscripts collections, photographs and oral histories, but we've decided to provide as many materials as we're able to digitally," Wykle said. "You can get to a good portion of our collection just by going online."

Participants interviewed in the archive range from soldiers in the allied war effort to WNC civilians and people fleeing persecution who sought refuge in the United States. World War II opened a generation's eyes to then conflicts rag-

SEE WWII PAGE 2