

The BLUE BANNER

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The News in Brief

NASA scandal centers around love triangle

Authorities arrested NASA astronaut Lisa Nowak Monday, charging her with battery, attempted kidnapping and attempted first-degree murder. Nowak allegedly attacked Colleen Shipman, the other point to a love triangle, and attempted to abduct her from a parking lot, according to reports.

Nowak, an astronaut since 1996, was a mission specialist on the Discovery shuttle, and Shipman, an Air Force captain, were both reportedly involved with astronaut Bill Oefelein, according to police reports.

NASA revoked flight privileges and sent Nowak on a 30-day suspension, preventing her from participating in any mission-related activities and preparations.

NASA reported they would review their psychological screening tests in response to the incident, according to officials.

Turner Broadcasting pays \$2 million for Boston bomb scare

After causing a city-wide bomb scare in Boston last Wednesday that cost the city around \$500,000, Turner Broadcasting said they accepted full responsibility for the incident, according to reports.

Citizens reported suspicious devices in tunnels and on bridges to police, mistaking 38 light box advertisements for Cartoon Network's Adult Swim show Aqua Teen Hunger Force as potential bombs last week and shut down many populated areas of the city, according to Boston officials.

The light boxes were part of a guerrilla marketing tactic to promote the show and were also placed in other heavily populated cities, including Los Angeles and Chicago, without incident. In a statement released by Turner, the company admitted fault and said the reaction from the public was reasonable, considering their post-September 11 environment.

Authorities arrested two men hired by the ad agency working for Turner who installed the light boxes, and their charges are still pending.

Position cut stuns, angers faculty

By Aaron Dahlstrom
STAFF WRITER

UNC Asheville's student affairs department recently implemented faculty restructuring and received skepticism from faculty and staff.

"It is something that the university needed to do in order to serve students better," said Ann Ponder, chancellor of UNC Asheville. "We had both evidence and advice that we needed to make these changes."

Affected departments include the counseling center and the health and wellness department. The school made the move in the best interest of students, according to Ponder.

"The student affairs area will be updated and will focus on current student needs," Ponder said. "It will allow us to serve students better and be more responsive."

Despite the school's intentions, the move drew controversy from those affected. The restructuring eliminates the position for a director of the counseling center, a position currently filled by Maggie Weshner, who has worked for the university for 28 years.

"So far the restructuring has been pretty devastating. We don't know any of the details," Weshner said. "The only thing we have been told is that we will be administratively combined with health services and that there will no longer be a counseling center director position."

Bill Haggard, vice chancellor of student affairs, said he made the final decision to combine the two departments.

"The main rationale for doing that was that today's college students have much more complex issues related to their psychological and emotional health needs," Haggard said.

The two weeks' notice Weshner received creates difficulty when trying to say goodbye to students, she said.

"Two weeks is an impossibly short time to even get in touch with students that I have seen, let alone terminate with them," she said.

The school offered her no chance to remain as a counselor or be reassigned to a different position, according to Weshner.

"I think the main thing for us is the abruptness and not being included in any kind of planning



CLINT LATHINGHOUSE - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Counseling center director Maggie Weshner sits in her office below health services. Soon, Weshner will discontinue her sessions with students after administration issued her a two-week notice after 28 years of service, a decision Chancellor Ann Ponder said they made in order to combine the counseling center and health services into one department.

for what we feel like is an important part of our lives," said Maggi Saucier, outreach coordinator and counselor in the counseling center.

The move gives counselors additional workloads, which creates difficulty for counselors wanting to give students their full attention, according to Saucier.

"I am really conscious of students not having a counselor who is stressed because they are having to see too many people or students not being able to get in," Saucier said. "To them maybe it feels we are not being as responsive as they would like us to be."

Saucier said she worries about the students receiving counseling from Weshner and how her sudden departure affects them.

"For people in counseling, that can be pretty traumatic, to just all of a sudden have your thera-

pist say they're gone," Saucier said. "When we get people coming in and telling us things about themselves that maybe nobody else on the planet knows, you have a special relationship with that person."

The school received advice from consultants brought in by the university to evaluate the student affairs department, according to Ponder.

"A combined health and counseling center is practiced in the best colleges and universities and is responsive to current student needs," Ponder said.

The combination of the two departments helps the school assist students better, many of whom require more than just counseling.

"Few students who need counseling or psychological support need only that support. They also need access to health care professionals, prescriptions and other attention to their whole well-being," Ponder said. "So a combined health and counseling area

will allow the university to see students and serve them in a better way than two separate departments."

Some faculty members see flawed logic behind the school's decisions.

"It makes no sense to dismiss or terminate someone on the argument of restructuring when the decisions about how to restructure haven't been made yet," said Bill Sabo, professor of political science and member of the faculty senate at UNC Asheville.

Sabo said he suspects the school may have additional motives behind the restructuring, citing a pattern in university behavior.

"In the last year, there have been five people, all of whom had more than 20 years' experience, who have been either pressured to retire or dismissed," Sabo said. "What is

troubling is that, if they are not doing a good job, how did they last so long?"

University officials refused to comment on the other five employees, saying they were personnel issues and could not be discussed legally.

A recent move by the University of North Carolina system pressures employees to opt out of their protection under the State Personnel Act and become exempt, causing another issue to arise. The move

allows the potential for increased pay and benefits, but allows the school system to terminate employees without any given reason, according to Sabo.

"If the university system wants to turn its employees into EPA (exempt status), it shouldn't go

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MAGGIE WESHNER
Director of Counseling Center

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Physics students gain momentum

By Sara Pardys
STAFF WRITER

UNC Asheville's Chapter of the Society of Physics Students recently received their ninth Outstanding Chapter Award from the American Institute of Physics' Society of Physics Students.

"They never tell you how many (chapters) get the award, but it's a small amount," said Randy Booker, physics professor and chair of the department.

The American Institute of Physics gives this award to less than 10 percent of more than 700 chapters nationwide.

UNC Asheville's chapter is pretty active, according to Booker.

The Society of Physics Students runs programs such as Physics is Phun in UNC Asheville's Super Saturday program for academically gifted students in grades three through eight. The program takes place on Saturday mornings for six weeks during both the fall and the spring.

The Society of Physics Students also participates in a program called Physics Festival at the Health Adventure, a health and science museum that promotes health awareness, in Pack Place.

"It's the students who run the demonstrations," Booker said.

Though Booker is the organiza-



MEGAN WILDMAN - STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Junior physics and music student Alex Sell, left, and senior physics and music major pose in front of the chalkboard. The American Institute of Physics issued UNC Asheville's Society of Physics Students their ninth Outstanding Chapter Award this year for achievements in the community, including tutoring and demonstrations.

tion's advisor, the students take the lead role in activities. At the Physics Festival, the Society of Physics Students holds demonstrations on topics such as sound, magnetism and waves. The group participated in this program both last year and this year.

In addition to these programs,

the Society of Physics Students will run the Science Olympiads for middle school and high school students in Highsmith Union on March 17.

"We have weekly free tutoring for people who are taking intro-

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The Grove reconciles with residents

By Neal Brown
STAFF WRITER

After three masked men intruded into a resident's apartment with a gun in January, the general manager of The Grove Apartments organized a meeting to address safety concerns.

About 25 out of approximately 500 residents gathered in The Grove's clubhouse to listen to Amanda Wiles, the complex's general manager, and senior police officers Casey Roberts and Leona Hamilton speak about the issue of residents' growing concern for their own safety at the apartment complex.

"I still am very proud of where we live and what we do," Wiles said during the meeting.

Wiles welcomes any resident to come into her office between the hours of 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. to discuss any number of topics they are concerned about, according to Wiles.

The Grove staff and management are starting monthly meetings as part of a new residents' life program. During these meetings, residents can voice questions and concerns they might have, according to Wiles.

"The Grove wants to have informative sessions on topics that you feel need to be discussed," Wiles said.

Hamilton is the community resource officer for the north district of Asheville, which includes The Grove as well as the Klondike Apartments, a complex adjacent to The Grove.

"I keep an intimate eye on the neighborhood," Hamilton said. A resident can approach the resource officer with problems

"Personal responsibility should be a number one priority."

CASEY ROBERTS
Grove Resource Officer

they have been unable to resolve with traditional policing, according to Hamilton.

"As a community resource officer, I enjoy working with people and I am very excited about this job," Hamilton said.

The Grove does not have a big crime problem, according to Roberts. Most likely, the non-residents attending the parties occurring at The Grove are the ones responsible, Roberts said.

"The residents themselves are not committing these crimes," Roberts said.

Tenants need to remember to be

responsible for themselves as well as their guests, according to Roberts.

"Personal responsibility should be a number one priority," Roberts said.

Residents are younger at this complex, and, for some, it is the first time they are out on their own, according to Roberts.

The fact that younger people live at The Grove makes it an easier target, according to Hamilton.

"People of an older generation are probably more careful than someone who is between the ages of 18 to 30," Hamilton said.

Some parties at The Grove probably should not happen, but it happens everywhere and is not necessarily a party problem as much as it is a drinking problem, according to Roberts.

"The crime that goes on at The Grove stems from the abuse of some type of substance," Roberts said.

Some residents felt the meeting did not resolve current safety concerns.

"I guess it spelled out what they think the problem is in some respect, but I was looking for more safety tips," said Jenny Nichols, senior psychology and education student.

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